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VOLUME 5
NUMBER 12

TAKE ONE

NOVEMBER 1977

UPFRONT 4

News, gossip and Whoopie, including letters from our readers.

FILM REVIEWS 6

Reviews of Valentino, 15 Nov, Stroszek, Le Vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort, Outrageous, Why Shoot the Teacher and The Werewolf of Washington, by ***Susan Schenker, Alan Collins, George Morris, Jan Dawson, Katherine Gilday, Gary McCallum,*** *and* ***Charles T. Gregory.***

Print the Fact: For and Against the Films of John Ford 15

Pierre Greenfield *agrees that Ford was a genius, but* not *because of his "masterworks".*

Agnes Varda Sings 21

Agnes Varda tells ***Ying Ying Wu*** *about the thought and work behind* One Sings, the Other Doesn't.

Monty, Lash and Me 24

Jim Christy *adds a footnote to cinema history. Lash, where are you?*

Looking for Diane Keaton 26

A glimpse at Diane Keaton as she is ground through the Hollywood star-making machinery. By ***James Monaco.***

Pauline Kael, the Desperate Critic 29

Has Pauline Kael lost her maverick integrity? ***Mitch Tuchman*** *examines the record.*

THE REGULARS 33

Columns by regulars ***Herman Weinberg, Kay Armatage, Bob Parent, Eric Liknaitsky, Robert Fiedel*** *and* ***Waldo Lydecker,*** *plus reports from the festivals by* ***Carmel Dumas, Holly Dressel*** *and* ***Laurie Deans.***

Groucho Marx: A Retrospective 41

One man's thought-provoking tribute to a tormented comic genius. By ***David Thomson.***

BOOKS 43

Book News and Reviews plus our regular checklist of just-published film books by ***George L. George.***

INFO 51

A complete list of sources for 16mm versions of films mentioned in this issue, plus conferences to attend, film festivals to enter, and our classifieds.

PUNDITS' PAGE 54

A handy-dandy guide to some of this season's major films in the form of nuggets gleaned from the writings of some of America's major movie critics, compiled by ***Susan Schenker.***

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TAKE ONE is published monthly by Unicorn Publishing Corp. Box 1778, Station B, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3B 3L3 (514-843-7733) and Box 95, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 4E1 (416-979-1984).

National retail distributors: For the USA: Eastern News Distributors Inc., 111 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10011 (212-255-5620). For the UK: South Bank Film Books, National Film Theatre, South Bank, Waterloo, London SE1. For Australia: Anchor Books Pty Ltd., 590 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia. For Canada and elsewhere: Unicorn Publishing Corp., Box 1778, Station B, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3B 3L3 (514-843-7733).

Subscription rates: North America, 12 issues for $6.00; Overseas, 12 issues for $10.40. Airmail: Add 75 cents per issue (North America) and $1 per issue (Overseas). Subscription sent free to individuals at prison addresses. Notice of **change of address** should include your old address as printed on a recent issue—please allow five weeks for processing. **Editorial Information:** Please send photocopies only. All manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope (or International Reply Coupon). While editors will take all reasonable care, they will not be held responsible for the loss of any such submissions. **Indexing:** TAKE ONE is indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index, the International Index to Film Periodicals, and the Multi-Media Reviews Index. **Microfilm** editions of this magazine are available from University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA 48106.
U.S. Postal Identification Number **317750**. Canadian second class mail registration Number **1899.** Printed at Montréal, Canada. Dewey Decimal Number: **791.43.** International Standard Serial Number **CN ISSN 0039-9132.**
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Postmasters: Send Form 3579 to Take One Magazine, Box 1778, Station B, Montréal, Canada H3B 3L3. Postage paid at Montréal. Second Class postage paid at New York, New York and additional mailing offices. Printed in Canada.

Volume 5, Number 12, published November 1, 1977.

UPFRONT

News

rumours

Nigger, the autobiography of DICK GREGORY, has been acquired for the screen by producer STEVE JAFFE, who is said to be negotiating with JAMES EARL JONES for the lead... Principal photography began August 1 on **Goin' South**, JACK NICHOLSON directing and starring in a story about a bank robber who is saved from hanging by a woman's decision to marry him... CLEAVON LITTLE has been signed to star in Universal's **FM**... German wunderkind filmmaker RAINER WERNER FASSBINDER will start filming next spring on **Berlin Alexanderplatz**, with budget set at an exceptional (for Germany) $6,000,000. With different casts, the same story will be shot simultaneously as a feature film and a nine-part television series...

★★★

Mid-October finally saw the much-delayed start of shooting on **Hair**, MILOS FORMAN directing his first film since **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**... $10,000 is apparently the price of a private screening of a film called **A Party at Kitty and Studs**—the only attraction being that a then-young and poor SYLVESTER STALLONE appears in the nude... Canada's best-known motion picture? Not **Duddy Kravitz** or **Rabid**, but **The Loon's Necklace**. More than 4000 prints have been purchased over the years... ROBERT REDFORD has been sworn in as chairman of the Provo Canyon (Utah) Sewer Service District... NAGISA (**In the Realm of the Senses**) OSHIMA is said to be at work on a feature about love and terror... ISABELLE ADJANI has the lead in WERNER HERZOG's remake of **Nosferatu**... KAREN BLACK has completed her stint in the Montreal-made feature **In Praise of Older Women** (both BIBI ANDERSSON and ELKE SOMMER walked out on the picture before shooting commenced)... ALFRED HITCHCOCK has bought the screen rights to ELMORE LEONARD's **Unknown Man no. 89** as the basis for The Master's next film. The story's about a process server and a beautiful blonde who team up to expose an elaborate stock fraud... Former "New York" Magazine publisher CLAY FELKER (now the publisher of "Esquire") has associated himself with entrepreneur ROBERT STIGWOOD (who produced **Tommy**) in the development of as-yet-unnamed film projects... January 9 is the scheduled start-date for **Magic**—RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH directing from the WILLIAM GOLDman script (based on his novel). ANTHONY HOPKINS, ANN MARGRET and BURGESS MEREDITH co-star... GILLO PONTECORVO (best known for **The Battle of Algiers**) will make his next feature (his first since **Burn,** seven years ago) in Toronto in February. Called **Operation Ogro,** it'll be about the assassination—three years ago—of a top Spanish politician by four Basque terrorists... Paramount Pictures has acquired INGMAR BERGMAN's first English-language film, **The Serpent's Egg**, for the US and Canada. LIV ULLMAN and DAVID CARRADINE star... Universal, for its part, is said to have signed CONSTANTINE COSTA-GAVRAS to develop a contemporary thriller that he will produce and direct in New York... Screenwriter PAUL SCHRADER (a big fan of **Take One**) has completed shooting on his first directorial effort, **Blue Collar**, a story about auto-workers that stars RICHARD PRYOR, HARVEY KEITEL and YAPHET KOTTO... October 11 was the scheduled start-date for **Eyes**, starring FAYE DUNAWAY as a menaced photographer... **China Syndrome**—on the other hand—doesn't start shooting until early January. Produced by MICHAEL DOUGLAS and directed by JAMES BRIDGES, it stars JANE FONDA, JACK LEMMON and MICHAEL DOUGLAS, and is an "action-suspense drama set against the background of a nuclear reactor"... And WILLIAM FRIEDKIN will produce and direct an as-yet-untitled film about the murder of union official Jock Yablonski.

sell your ideas to tv

Independent Cinema Artists and Producers (ICAP) is a non-profit organization that sells independently-made films and videotapes to cable TV. ICAP returns 75% of sales revenue to the filmmaker and is currently seeking new "product" (videotapes must be 3/4" cassettes). If you have a film that you think might find a market in this fast-developing area, why not contact John Giancola at ICAP, P.O. Box 775, Canal Street Station, NYC 10013 (212-226-1655 or 212-580-0558).

Or, you could contact The Peter Rodgers Organization, 969 Hilgard Avenue (Suite 603), LA 90024 (213-473-4709). They, too, are looking for films (features, cartoons, documentaries, specials) for possible sale to television—not only in North America, but around the world.

Tell 'em we sent you.

but first, this message

It was too good to last. What with the average filmgoer more youthful (18-29); more affluent and less TV-addicted than the bulk of the population, it was only a question of time until someone decided they ought to be seeing more in the way of advertising than simply coming-attractions at their favourite cinemas. This is the month that North American theatres go the way of the rest of the world: commercials come to the movies.

Starting October 26, some 3000 theater screens will be carrying ads for Chrysler cars and Seiko watches, a product of Parisian Roger Hatchuel's 18-month-long behind-the-scenes effort to create a new national advertising medium along the lines of the one he operates successfully in France. At about the same time, Nashville-based Cinemavision will start plugging RCA Records in a further 1000 theatres.

In tests over the past few months, Hatchuel's people have found no appreciable adverse reaction to commercials in cinemas, but they'll be limited to 3-minute segments in any case. With the costs relatively high (Hatchuel charges $850 for a 30-second ad per 1000 admissions; Cinemavision is charging $18—network television spots work out to about $2-$4 per 1000 viewers), it seems clear that only major national advertisers are going to be able to experiment in the new medium—and that bodes well for the quality of the ads. Certainly, if they come up to the level of, say, Elbert Budin's TV classic in which a Sunkist orange is deliciously peeled in juicy slow motion, or of Louis Malle's theatrical ads for Levi jeans, then feature filmmakers may suddenly discover they have a very tough act to follow. For hard-pressed theatre operators—on the other hand—the ads might prove a real boon: they collect one-third of what Hatchuel's charging and half of Cinemavision's gross.

gathering moss

If you get a chance to see Robert Frank's movie, take it—you'll be one of a lucky few.

Frank—then a New York-based photographer—so pleased the Rolling Stones with his album cover for their 1971 LP "Exiles on Main Street" that he was invited to come along and film the group's 1972 tour. But when the Stones saw the completed two-hour film in 1973, they insisted on some major cuts before it could be released (one report mentions footage of an orgy aboard the group's jet).

Frank exhibited the film (with or without the cuts is so far unclear) a couple of times in California in 1975, then a couple more times in Canada the year after (Frank had meanwhile moved to Mabou Mines, Nova Scotia), apparently hoping that press interest would pressure the Stones into authorizing the film's release.

That didn't happen. What did happen was that, in early March of this year, sheriffs visited Frank in an effort to confiscate the film, acting on an affidavit from Mick Jagger in which the singer claimed that the filmmaker "distorted events through selective editing, and has included in the film footage events which are private to the individual members of the Rolling Stones which should never be exhibited without our consent."

Though an application for an injunction against Frank had already been scheduled for hearing in the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, the Stones settled (perhaps not wanting even the justices to view the film) before the trial date, with Frank reportedly receiving a monetary settlement and allowed to keep a single, cut, print in exchange for a commitment that the single remaining print will not be shown at all until March 7, 1979, and only four times a year thereafter.

Presumably, additional suits against Frank that had been initiated in (at least) Paris and New York have also been dropped.

Letters

The gospel truth?
In response to a letter written in *Take One*, Vol. 5, No. 10, by Reg Hartt, I would like to comment on some rather profound statements made on his behalf. I personally have never read such a piece of hypocrisy. His statements are based on supposition rather than fact. The second last closing paragraph of his letter refers to the headaches caused by presentation of incorrect factual criteria by certain authors. I would feel very guilty if anyone took the statements in *his* letter for gospel truth. I have sighted the corrections for the benefit of people who intend to do so.

I disagree with the point: "after those swinging doors are abandoned, the Popeye cartoon loses its spirit and flavour." In 1939, the title card for the cartoon was briefly changed for four of the starts with no loss in quality or content. The same thing holds true for the change of title card in late 1941 to the last Fleischer cartoon in mid-1942.

Fleets of Strength, correctly spelled *Fleets of Stren'th*, was not the first change of uniform for Popeye. The first was in *Mighty Navy* c. 14/ Nov/ 41. *Fleets of Stren'th* followed four cartoons later c. 13/ March/ 42.

As for Fleischer Popeyes containing no racist overtones, view *Blunder Below* c. 13/ Feb/ 42 with its racist interpretation of a Japanese submarine crew member.

I cannot believe, from what I've read, that the Famous Studios deleted all improvisation in favour of organized scripts. As late as 1948 in a Popeye titled *Wigwam Whoopie* he still appears to be mumbling under his breath in the same manner as in earlier Fleischer Popeyes. Keep in mind that the reason for less improvisation could be due to the fact that Jack Mercer was writing many of the stories. He may have been incorporating, at the same time, the joke content previously used for improvisation.

I hope that through this letter I have cleared up the misconceptions delivered by Mr. Hartt.

B. Jaques
Willowdale, Ontario

Roses and plums
May "the pot call the kettle black"? Or is it the other way around? At any rate, may I in the process of tossing a rose to you for the excellent piece by Miss Nash, "Cancelled," on Jean Muir (July-August, '77), also pick a couple of bones with you, as they say?

How is it possible for a correspondent to do a "Report from Cannes" (in the same issue) and have nothing to say about the sudden death there of Roberto Rossellini, save to precede his name with the word "late"? Mr Minish shows us.

And did your correspondent in South-East Asia, Mr Hullett, again in the same issue, in his column, "Letter from the East," think that anyone (I repeat, *anyone*) could possibly by interested in the trivia with which he filled his column?

But the plum (if that's the word) is surely Gene Youngblood's effusion, *Flamingo Hours*, still in the same issue (what an issue!). Surely our collective legs are being pulled by this one—surely someone is kidding. I would have thought "Gene Youngblood" a *nom-de-plume* for Woody Allen, except that I know there *is* a Gene Youngblood. Then how to explain how it happened? Can he really be serious?

But the Jean Muir piece is a beauty and you are to be congratulated for it. That's what I like about *Take One*— it has the widest range of any film magazine, and that allows for anything and everything, which makes the pearls we find in it all the more precious. Keep it up.

Herman Weinberg
New York

Starry-eyed
Concerning George Morris' review of *Star Wars* in your July/ August issue: I do not know the first thing about reviewing a film, nor do I pretend to know. But I *love* films.

It appears to me that Morris misses a very important point about George Lucas' films *American Graffiti* and *Star Wars*. He says (correctly so) that the characters in both films are "one dimensional cartoons," and then cuts Lucas down for this fact. The point he misses is that the characters in both films are purposely played that way. What is important in Lucas' films (including *THX1138*), is not the inner character himself, but what that character represents. The kids growing up in *Graffiti* represent kids growing up everywhere.

In *Star Wars*, again, the characters are important for what they represent—the hero-adventurer lurking somewhere inside us all.

This seems to me to be a terribly simple point, but one that Morris completely misses. He misses a number of others but I'd need a doctoral thesis to go into them all.

Anybody (like Morris), who can sit in a movie house and not tremendously enjoy films like *Graffiti* and *Star Wars* doesn't deserve my criticism, just my pity!

Cleve Dheensaw
Victoria, B.C.

I must say that I unmitigatedly disagree with George Morris' review of *Star Wars*. First, he spends the first three paragraphs giving the readers a "buffer" so as to prepare non-believers that *he actually has written a negative review of Star Wars*. So what else is new?

Second, he states, referring to the special effects: "There is no sense of wonder or magic in the film, no feeling of naïvité and innocent belief that characterize the genre films of an earlier age." That's his opinion. It's all opinion of course, as any review is; however, I would like to see his opinion backed up by specific examples—especially a specific example of the "wonderous and naïve" special effects of an earlier age which compare more favorably than its contemporary "duplicate" in *Star Wars*.

I feel Lucas has created a more penetrable, richly and densely populated, life-infused space-fantasy than any previous filmmaker whose original source was Gulliver on Mars and Edgar Rice Burroughs. This is what science fiction films have been attempting to do for years. It's what the *Flash Gordon* serials tried to do: Create a complete outer-space environment.

I resent Morris' selection of words. "Lucas uses every conceivable means to encourage the audience's condescension towards *Star Wars*," writes Morris. First, why should Lucas encourage them not to get involved in his movie? Second, by using the word "condescension," isn't Morris using his conceivable means of vocabulary to present to the reader Lucas' film from a negative viewpoint?

Finally, does Morris really feel Lucas conceived *Star Wars* as a series of assault tactics to keep the audience awake? Rather than "assault," let me choose another word—zap. I like it better than assault. Besides, I think all Lucas wanted to do, really, was to zap us.

K.W. Henderson
West Hollywood, California

Dear Boppers
Take One has been getting an awful lot like other film magazines lately. Could you have more intelligent, lunatic raving pieces like you used to? Where is Michael Goodwin? How about a survey of B movies recently made? So many hot ones pass through sleazo theatres unnoticed and they are always neglected by rags like *Film Comment* and *Sight and Sound*. Maybe more stuff on Porno and other genres too.

Bruno Ruhland
Orinda, CA

Adoration
For the past nine years I have been researching the life and career of the late silent film actress Renee Adoree (1898-1933), and I would welcome correspondence with any of your readers who have biographical and other information they can share with me, or who would just like to correspond with someone interested in keeping Renee's memory alive. Other fans, please write.

Randye B. Cohen
451 West Lake Dasha Drive
Plantation, Fla. 33324

A fan
I think my subscription was for 5 years, under a special longterm deal you were offering. Can you advise me of expiration date? I subscribe to *Film Comment*, read about half of each issue; used to subscribe to *Sight and Sound* but realized I was only reading one or two articles at best per issue. With *Take One* I read almost *everything*.

Rick Toothman
Mannington, W. Va.

Redneck?
About the article on Sam Peckinpah's *Cross of Iron* by W.S. Di Piero (Vol. 5, No. 10). It is a brilliant display of intellectual redneckism, isn't it?

Alan Booth
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

FILM REVIEWS

VALENTINO

DIRECTED BY KEN RUSSELL

by Susan Schenker

Rudolph Valentino wore a wristwatch. In the twenties this was considered a distinctly unmasculine affectation. His watch was one of several 'peculiarities,' including a slave bracelet and tons of jewelry that fed the greedy reporters who were more than eager to debunk the first major American sex symbol; a swarthy un-American continental type who had captured the adulation of the American woman. Was Valentino a "queer;" a "fairy"? In truth, it seems that Rudy wasn't gay (if it matters) and even in Ken Russell's version of the life of the star, Rudy keeps telling people all he wants is to settle down and grow oranges. The lure of California for Valentino wasn't the bright lights, but rather a piece of land that might remind him of home in Castaneletta, Italy.

But, ahh, that pastoral dream was not to be. He came to the attention of scriptwriter June Mathis, who launched his career and guided him to stardom. As his fame grew, it was only a matter of time before the reaction set in. After Valentino appeared in *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1924) as an outrageous French fag with heavy make-up and a heart-shaped beauty mark on his cheek, the press smelled blood and began to accuse this "powder puff" of being a serious danger to the morals of America's women.

Valentino's life is definitely Ken Russell territory, and it's only strange that he didn't make the film earlier. *Valentino* is devoted almost entirely to the question of Valentino's off- and on-screen sexual roles. As opposed to other recent Hollywood bios (*Gable and Lombard, The Last Tycoon, W.C. Fields and Me*), *Valentino* doesn't deal with the studio star system so much as with personal relationships that affected Valentino's career, and even more important, with Russell's fantasies of those relationships.

In the overproduced conclusion of *Valentino,* Rudy challenges a reporter, O'Neil, to a fist-fight in response to an article attacking Rudy's masculinity. The challenge is accepted and Rudy meets his foe in a crowded hall, resembling a three-ring-circus. It comes as a surprise to Rudy that the fight is set up as a joke (with audience members dancing around between rounds to the tune of a Valentino parody), but the fighting itself is very real. Rudy takes a beating, but triumphs in the end and knocks O'Neil out. The reporter then challenges Rudy to a drinking bout, and in a speakeasy, Rudy wins again by drinking O'Neil under the table. And, in the final scene, Rudy, alone in his hotel room, reaches for an orange on a table, suddenly clutches his stomach in pain and executes a swan dive, hitting the floor. The orange rolls out of his hand and is held in focus with the fallen hero behind.

It's a heavy, symbolic ending, right? But it never took place. The *Rocky*-like fight scene might have been what Rudy himself would have envisioned, but in reality the reporter never answered his challenge. As for his death, Valentino did die of ulcer complications, but he died in a hospital, alone and frightened.

Russell's interpretive fantasies of Valentino's life include a fictitious scene in which Rudy (in his first career as a hired dancer) teaches a tango to the great Nijinsky. It's a torrid balletic sequence and a smart one: Nureyev, as Valentino, has a chance to strut his stuff. In another scene, Rudy gets jailed overnight for bigamy in Mexico (after trying to marry Natasha Rambova before getting a legal divorce from his first wife). Rudy's vicious treatment at the hands of his cellmates, who resemble Fellini leftovers, is a bit much.

The film has fewer of Russell's camp tricks than we've come to expect, however. What holds it together is the sincerity and earnestness of Rudolf Nureyev. Although Nureyev's heavy Russian face is nothing like Valentino's acquiline swarthiness, the charisma Nureyev displays is not very different from the style that made Valentino

---

Susan Schenker is a New York freelance writer and a reader for major motion picture studios. She did some of the original research for the producers of *Valentino*.

a star. Audiences seeing Nureyev for the first time in a feature film feel an intense curiosity to see "that face" much as they might have wanted to see more and more of the original Rudolf(ph). Credit Russell with some crafty casting.

But the women in Valentino's life, primarily Michelle Phillips as Natasha Rambova (alias Winifred Hudnut) and Leslie Caron as her purple-mouthed buddy, Nazimova, come off as cartoon exaggerations. Only Felicity Kendal as June Mathis is allowed a dimension of humanity. Valentino's trials and tribulations begin with the appearance of Natasha, played by Phillips with an unattractive stridency that makes her romance with Rudy hard to understand. Natasha ruled Valentino's career and did him more harm than good with the "artistic" standards she set for him. She, along with her mentor Nazimova, led the guileless Rudy through avant-garde happenings into the mysteries of the occult. The exploitation of Rudy thus didn't come at the hands of his producers, Lasky and Schenck, nor those of his own agent, George Ullman (played by Seymour Cassel), but as a result of his heeding the advice of the women he loved.

Occasionally, Russell attempts to demythify the Valentino legend. The best example of this is the scene on the set of *The Sheik* (1921) where Rudy attempts an off-screen seduction of Natasha. By the time they are both nude (and carefully contorted so little pubic hair is showing) Natasha continues to babble on and on about ways she can help Rudy further his career. It's about as erotic as a business meeting. The next scene is 'footage' of the rape scene from *The Sheik*. An audience of mesmerized women watch in a theatre and the camera closes in on a weeping June Mathis who is so overcome that she must rush out. It's clear, then, that Valentino, the super-lover, was a fiction of the silver screen. Off-screen, both in the film and in whatever historical documentation exists, he was far from it.

The structure of the film, by Russell standards, is tame. Opening with the hysterical scene following Valentino's death, the various women in his life parade in, give their recollections in flashback, and drift out. It's a corny device and although it keeps the story moving logically, it isn't very ambitious. *Valentino* is the most reasonable film Russell has made in a while. The film isn't trashy or cheap; which may disappoint hard-core Russell fans. Also, Valentino isn't a very popular cult figure, today. His brand of sensuality was too crude and melodramatic even in his own day. His untimely death (at the age of 31) did more for his legend than anything even Natasha could have dreamed up for him. But the film deserves to be seen. Due to Russell's restraint and the winning performance by Nureyev, *Valentino* succeeds in documenting the luckless Italian's life as an on-screen lover and an off-screen frustrated farmer who just kept hanging around with the wrong Hollywood types. ●

15 NOV

DIRECTED BY HUGUES MIGNAULT and RONALD BRAULT

by Alan Collins

November 15th is an exhilarating film about a turning point in Quebec history and the jubilance of a people. It conveys a radical perception of history, questions established institutions, and attempts to change the political consciousness of its audience. The film covers events in Montreal on the day of the Provincial Elections of 1976 that resulted in a landslide victory for the Parti Québécois.

The day begins with Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa arriving in a limousine to give a final press conference before voters go the polls. The Parti Québécois appears to be the underdog, and the arguments of their opponents seem to dominate the media. Foreknowledge of the final outcome gives the negative predictions of the AM radio newscasters a heavy irony. The tide begins to turn in a great wave across the the city of Montreal. A slow pan across the city from Mount Royal ends on a long line of traffic being released as all the lights turn green and a flashing arrow points to the left. The city itself appears as a collective personality in the film. Not since Rossellini's *Rome, Open City* has a film so movingly captured the pulse of a city and the aspirations of its people.

The day (and the film) progresses to an exultant climax at a large sports arena where the election results are tabulated on a giant scoreboard. As the PQ chalks up more and more votes, excitement builds in the packed auditorium and infects the camera crews themselves. The politicians' prepared speeches are thrown aside and there is an outpouring of shared emotion that spreads across the arena as the people realize the historical significance of the moment. In René Lévesque's words, "un petit peuple est devenu un grand peuple." It is a magical moment of filmmaking when all artifice is stripped away and the people are shown reacting instinctively to a totally unprecedented situation.

The symbol of the PQ election campaign was a straw broom, which aimed at making a clean sweep of the corruption in Quebec politics. The broom image appears in a recurring interview with a floor sweeper in a Montreal school, who offers his down-to-earth views on the changes occurring in his society. At the end of the film a gigantic effigy of a broom is carried on the shoulders of some of the people at the arena and presented to the candidates on the platform.

The highlights of the film are many, but those that come to mind most readily are: Denise Filiatrault leaping for joy and embracing left-wing journalist and poet Gérald Godin's portrait when the news comes of his victory over Bourassa; the candid comments of Quebecers during Prime Minister Trudeau's television speech as he grudgingly recognizes the PQ (the camera begins tight on the TV set, pulling back to reveal its location at PQ headquarters); Claude Charron left speechless as he realizes the full implications of the results, and René Lévesque's gesture of sympathy for the defeated Bourassa.

The filmmakers wisely let the opposition to the PQ dig its own grave. Opposing views are fully and fairly presented, and then undermined by what is shown in the rest of the film. What comes across is that since November 15th Quebec will never be the same again. There is a new spirit, a door has been opened to the future. It is important for the rest of Canada to understand this if it is to continue to communicate with the new Quebec. This film conveys Quebec's new elation and freedom. Like most of Quebec politics nowadays, it comes from the heart. ●

Alan Collins recently edited the feature *Love at First Sight* for Quadrant Films in Toronto.

STROSZEK

DIRECTED BY WERNER HERZOG

by George Morris

Thirty-five-year-old Werner Herzog looms in the forefront of the New German Cinema, and his latest film *Stroszek* is his most brilliantly realized work. *Stroszek* is an exhilarating hybrid, a tone poem that mixes the absurdist tragicomedy of a Beckett play with equal parts of the road movies that saturated the American cinema in the wake of *Easy Rider*.

If Herzog's literary roots lie in Beckett, his cinematic antecedents include Tod Browning, Erich von Stroheim, Buster Keaton and Luis Bunuel. The pervasive theme of Herzog's work is survival. The dispassionate eye he casts on his displaced dwarfs, deaf-mutes and desert recluses is balanced by a compassionate and nonjudgmental sensibility. Herzog does not sentimentalize or patronize his misfits; he discovers intimations of hope and renewal in their insistence on survival.

As Stroszek, Bruno S. makes his second appearance in a Herzog film. As Kasper Hauser in *Every Man for Himself and God Against All,* Bruno S. embodied the archetypal Herzog character, a "wild child," forced to cope with the exigencies of 19th-century civilization. Stroszek is transplanted to 20th-century America, specifically the isolated farm country of Wisconsin where he has come with the whore (Eva Mattes) and the stoic septuagenarian (Clement Scheitz) who were his only friends in Berlin.

America promises a new lease on life for this unlikely trio. Stroszek keeps getting thrown in jail in Berlin for drunken behaviour, Eva is repeatedly exploited and abused by her pimps, and the old man is eager to seize the utopian opportunities his nephew in Wisconsin writes about in his letters. Paying for their journey with money Eva has earned at her trade, the three migrate to Railroad Flats, Wisconsin.

Settling into their prefabricated house, this self-styled little family soon disintegrates under the pressures of a society that makes no effort to accommodate their extraordinary "otherness." Eva returns to her old profession and runs off with a trucker. Herr Scheitz is arrested after he and Stroszek rob a barber shop and then blithely cross the street to spend their swag at the supermarket. Stroszek, friendless and homeless (the bank has repossessed their house for failing to meet their loan payments), steals a tow truck and drives to North Carolina. Spending his last three dollars at a Cherokee Indian reservation, he climbs into a funicular that goes up and down a mountain in back of an amusement arcade. Stroszek has inadvertently jammed the machinery throughout the park, so as the film closes, the arcade's grotesque attractions are trapped in their individual specialties. The rabbit keeps riding the fire engine, the chickens keep dancing and playing the piano, and the duck keeps hitting the drums. High above it all, Stroszek sits with a shotgun and a smoked chicken, ascending and descending the mountain.

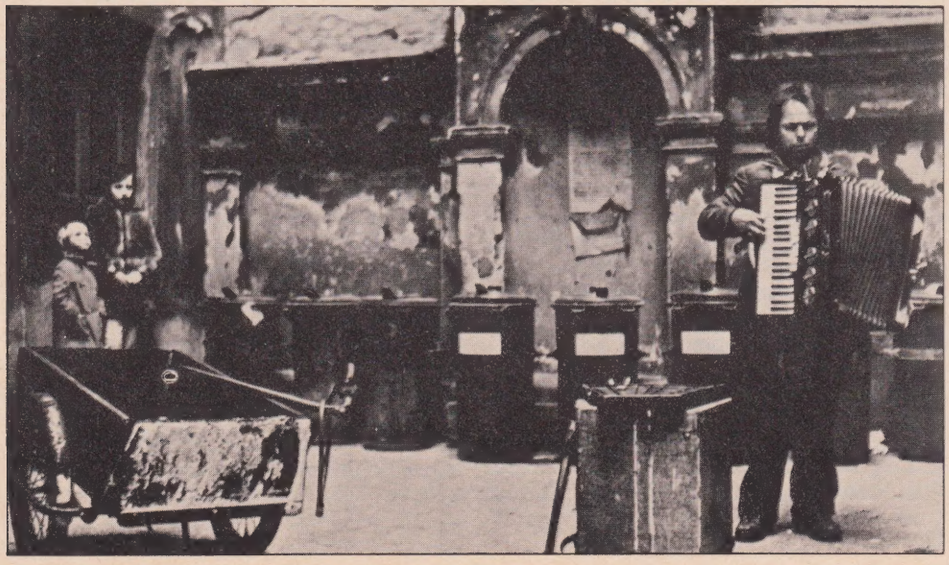
Herzog's camera explores these estranged immigrants' efforts to acclimate themselves with a style alternately static and kinetic. A dialectic between constriction and release is established by Herzog's juxtaposition of hand-held camera work with stationary frames, providing a visual correlative for the tension between the characters' external efforts to change their lives and the inner stasis which precludes even the possibility of change. The opening shot of the film reveals Stroszek and his jailer moving toward the foreground of a fixed frame as successive locks are opened, the sound of the steel bars clanging shut reverberating through the prison corridor. In the following shot the camera prowls around the bureaucratic enclave where the authorities return Stroszek's possessions to him, examining the collection of items that defines his existence: bugle horn, accordion, passport, a few clothes and a little money.

Herzog develops this visual / thematic dialectic throughout the film. A vertical composition of Stroszek and his neighbor Scheitz sitting at the piano in their Berlin flat in long shot, wondering what has happened to Eva, is succeeded by the handheld single shot in which Stroszek's piano-playing is interrupted by the intrusion of Eva's pimps. Humiliating and tormenting him, they fling Stroszek atop his piano, force him to kneel, pray, hurl abuse on him, and place a bell on his head and another on his ass. Handheld shots of Eva working in the truckstop café in Wisconsin, and handheld shots of the trio's entrance into, and gleeful examination of, their standardized living quarters, enclose the arrival of this prefabricated home, a serpentine monstrosity snaking horizontally across a motionless frame.

Herzog also parallels the displacement his characters experience with disorienting cuts, inharmonious angling, and unbalanced framing. The rhythm of *Stroszek* is purposefully discordant; even the rhythms within individual scenes clash, cadences determined by the separate distinctive pulses of the three major characters. Stroszek, Eva and Herr Scheitz are all tuned in on different wave lengths. That these three should ever set up housekeeping together is a leap of faith Herzog successfully hurdles by irrevocably closing off any other options during the establishing sequences in Berlin. Like Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot,* Herzog's trio cling to one another for survival. If I believe Herzog a superior artist to Beckett, it is because the director creates a social context for his characters' alienation, as opposed to the absurdist wastelands of Beckett where anything is possible so nothing really matters. Beckett's redundant verbalization reverberates in a vacuum, whereas Herzog's images of alienation resonate in the memory because Stroszek and his companions refuse to consign themselves to despair.

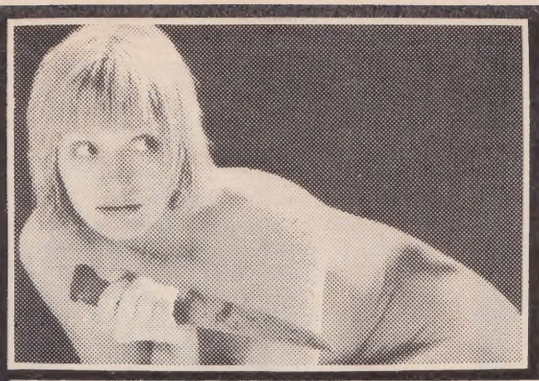
Herzog's images of alienation resonate in the memory because Stroszek and his companions refuse to consign themselves to despair.

George Morris is a free-lance film critic based in New York.



The tenacity with which they endeavor to cope is emblemized in the stunning sequence where Stroszek accompanies a doctor to a maternity ward to observe a premature baby. As the doctor's arms envelop the infant, it screams wildly, its strong grip reflex holding on for dear life, its survival instinct already formed for the struggle that lies ahead. Like the child-man Stroszek, this premature child is not so dissimilar from a wizened old man. In this wondrous moment Herzog induces a very complicated reaction in the viewer that vacillates between laughter and tears.

As in the Kasper Hauser film, Stroszek's estrangement is reinforced by the casting of Bruno S. Like the desert nomads of *Fata Morgana* (1971) and the dwarfs in *Even Dwarfs Started Small* (1970), Bruno S. is a found object, shaped and integrated (but never manipulated or exploited *à la* Warhol or Morrissey) into Herzog's cosmic view. A 45-year-old man who has spent the greater portion of his life in mental institutions, Bruno S. doesn't so much enact the role of Stroszek as command the screen with his formidable presence. His bulky frame lurches through the film, his eyes fixed at some point just beyond the camera. Off-balance, hands involuntarily covering his face or shooting up into the air, Bruno S. is marching to the beat of a different drummer. Wonderfully mysterious and contradictory, he loves to drink excessively, soothes himself by relaxing at the piano, often forgets to button his fly, and displays great trust and tenderness toward all. When a doctor in the maternity ward admits to Bruno S. that he cannot answer all of his questions, because "we know so little about human beings," the impenetrability of human experience becomes painfully clear. It is a measure of Werner Herzog's greatness that he accepts the impossibility of omniscience and still does not despair. *Stroszek* attests to his generosity as a man and as an artist. ●



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RIMBAUD EST MORT

DIRECTED BY JEAN-PIERRE LEFEBVRE

by Jan Dawson

Possibly the most interesting, maligned and misunderstood film at this year's Cannes Festival was one of the official Canadian entries in the Competition.

Jan Dawson is a freelance critic, broadcaster, translator and programme consultant.

Admittedly, there's a level on which it invites misunderstanding: because it plays with clichés, and because the damage that clichés can do is a crucial part of its subject matter, it is hard to describe the content of *Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort* without making the film itself sound trite, like a veritable anthology of *déjà vu*. The narrative follows Abel (a Quebec pilot played by Marcel Sabourin, himself in danger of becoming a cliché of Quebec cinema) from Paris to Marseilles, and from unfulfilled love (Myriam Boyer) to brief-encounter romance (Anouk Ferjac). And it deals, but gently and obliquely, with that colonial cliché—the quest for cultural roots and meaning.

The contest is clearly not remarkable, and it is through the form and imagery that the film's subtlety finds its expression. It begins in an art gallery, where a guide is regaling a small group of bewildered tourists with a rather pedantic lecture on the differences between expressionism and impressionism. Then, in the scenes which immediately follow, Paris and its occupants—captured mostly in fixed shots which give them a posed and slightly unreal quality—appear in tableaux evocative alternately of Cézanne paintings and touristic postcards. Indeed, many of the characters —most notably the sidewalk ballad singer —exist only as animated postcards, self-conscious elements of local colour poised between current myth and historical still-life.

Abel is unable to relate this historic colourfulness to the darker-coloured

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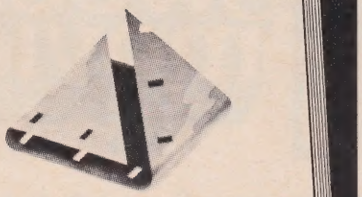

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Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort (Myriam Boyer)

scenes of family suffering he witnesses in Charleville (Rimbaud's home-town, predominantly black and grey). In Marseilles, whither a Parisian probation officer has also come in quest of her own detached roots, expressionism gives way to impressionism, to the play of light, especially on water. But the beauty of the Midi proves ultimately of no more relevance than the Paris parks or the Charleville tenements. As Abel concludes, it is all like a vast picture postcard, but he doesn't know who to send it to. And this sense of dislocation, and of people moving through decors to which they can feel no more than a historical relationship, dominates the style of the film.

By turns gay and sad, and for the most part languorously beautiful, its beauty remains as separate from its Québecois hero as the Cézanne paintings on the museum walls. The France of his ancestors, the France he has come to find, exists only in the museums and in his imagination. And it is Lefebvre's genius that he has invented a visual language for describing this shadowy terrain between the public gallery and the corridors of the mind. ●

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OUTRAGEOUS

DIRECTED BY RICHARD BENNER

by Katherine Gilday

I might have said, first off, that whatever the merits of this good-natured little film it's not exactly what you'd call "outrageous." Except seeing it in a North Toronto theatre I was forcibly reminded how very much outrageousness is a matter of where you live—in all senses. There was a girl in that particular audience, you see, who *was* genuinely outraged by this story of the friendship between a drag queen and a female schizophrenic and by the gay milieu in which the story takes place. Her angry comments floated over the entire soundtrack, and at one point in the film where two men in a gay bar were shown kissing she let out a disgusted moaning "oh no" that mounted to a shriek.

It's easy to forget, insulated as many of us are within our various protective circles (like the hip unanimity of a film festival audience), how representative that girl's attitude probably is. Her attitude is what the title of the film refers to. And despite all the anti-hype about the hype over this film, my guess is that her attitude and the world it represents has got a lot to do with the startling success *Outrageous* is having. Going to see it is like receiving an infectiously cheerful confirmation that being disgustingly wrong in the straight world's eyes is basically all right, that there are a great many others on the outside along with you, and that craziness has its own special rewards. No wonder they've been lining up to see the film for weeks in New York. As Robin, the female impersonator, tells his friend Liza the schizophrenic at the end: "You're alive and sick and living in New York—like 8 million other people."

One of the things I liked best in the film was this unerring sense of just how much it matters where you live—especially if you're gay or crazy. At the start, when Liza moves

Katherine Gilday is a Toronto writer.

in with him, Robin is living and working as a hairdresser in Toronto. As he begins, with her encouragement, to let out some of the "crazy people," like Tallulah Bankhead, inside him, it soon becomes clear that the city will neither tolerate him as a drag queen part-time, nor support him as one full-time. Any city that features Bavarian accordionists at its supper-clubs and thinks entertainment means Anne Murray, Robin points out wryly, is definitely not ready for his act. What else can he do but go to New York?, his friends ask. Mugs Robin, "I could always get a Canada Council grant."

He leaves for New York and immediate success as a drag queen. Liza stays behind to have the baby she thinks will prove to the Bone-Crusher who haunts her that she's alive and not of his kingdom. When she loses the baby and recedes into her madness, Robin comes back to carry her off to New York, away from the clutches of her straight friends and the psychiatrists. The final jubilant scene in which the reunited friends dance together amidst the crush of a New York gay bar has to be taken, I think, as the celebration of their liberation not only from their own fears—but from the narrow provincial culture that has nurtured them. Canada, the conclusion is plain, is no place for freaks.

The film was shot on a very low budget and it looks it. Underneath its many technical deficiencies, too, a more basic problem of muddled intentions seems evident—as though the film that was shot were very different from the film that was put together in the editing room, and the producers simply didn't have the money to cover their tracks. The story-line is quite choppy overall but the transitions between Robin in New York and Liza in Toronto are particularly rough, cuts very evidently made right into the middle and end of the Toronto scenes. For some reason a large portion of the material with Liza, including a secondary plot involving her manic friend Marvin, has been discarded.

I think what probably happened is that Craig Russell's dynamite performance as the female impersonator (the film is based on a story by Margaret Gibson that in turn was based on her friendship with Russell, a real-life female impersonator) shifted the entire balance of the film. Hollis McLaren *looks* right for the role of Liza, her delicacy suggesting something of the wistful fragility and vulnerability of Mia Farrow, but she's too uncertain an actress to resist overdoing the waifish whimsy of her part. Fundamentally it's the warmth and comic authority of Russell's characterization that gives Robin's and Liza's relationship the credibility it possesses. And with the film focused largely on his sensational on-stage impersonations, Russell really walks away with the whole thing.

There's a refreshingly humane perspective at work in this film—an attempt, albeit not entirely successful, to get past the stereotypes and demonstrate that the friendship between Liza and Robin depends on a love and acceptance of each other's individuality that cuts across all other structured allegiances. It's not exactly the coolest thing in gay circles, we're led to understand, to aspire to being a drag queen. As well, both Liza and Robin's sexual partners (they're the closest of friends but they "sleep in different worlds") are revealed in their own special brands of intolerance and insensitivity.

Ultimately, though, the film's appeal and its greatest strength derives from the sheer exuberance of its humour, the campy extravagances of its milieu. The banter among Robin and friends is quick and wickedly hilarious. We're drawn into irresistible complicity with their zestful putdowns of straight society. Through our complicity in their laughter and our strong comic identification with Robin we get an inkling of the truly "gay," ironic resilience which people on society's outskirts learn in order to survive and affirm themselves. And when we watch the former hairdresser flower into the magnificent opulence of Mae West, it becomes difficult to disagree with the film's closing lyrics—"Got to be what you got to be." ●

WHY SHOOT THE TEACHER?

DIRECTED BY SILVIO NARIZZANO

by Gary McCallum

In many respects the first three-quarters of Silvio Narizzano's *Why Shoot the Teacher?* display striking similarities to Sinclair Ross's *As for Me and My House* as well as to other tortured tales of life on the Canadian Prairies. The last quarter resembles nothing so much as *To Sir with Love* transplanted to the open spaces of rural Saskatchewan. While the first part feelingly presents, albeit often with compassionate good humour, the bleakness and harshness of life on the Prairies during the Depression, the end peters out into hail-teacher-well-met sentimentality. The main reason for this brokenbacked quality revolves around Samantha Eggar, or rather around the absence of Samantha Eggar, for it is after her part in the film concludes that *Teacher* becomes most problematical.

Gary McCallum is a Toronto freelance writer.

The cast and crew of Why Shoot the Teacher? (except for Silvio Narizzano, asleep in a truck at the time).

The film's central character, its controlling presence, is Max Brown (Bud Cort), a young man about twenty years old who has been hired to teach school in a rural Saskatchewan community named Willowgreen during the Depression. This, his first job, proves not only his introduction into the working world but also his introduction into a reality of a kind foreign to him as a city-dweller from a large family. In Willowgreen he confronts for the first time isolation, loneliness, and more physical hardships and deprivations typical of the time and the place and the job. At the start Max Brown hovers indeterminately near the nebulous border dividing adolescence and adulthood. The travails of his new life form his rite of passage across that border.

Why Shoot the Teacher? then is a story of youth's initiation into adulthood, with the gentle irony of it being that it is the teacher who is taught about life. The story line that bears this theme, however, is pretty thin, so thin that it threatens to attenuate into nonexistence. What narrative momentum there is concerns Max simply getting through the school year intact. Thus we have a film anecdotal in structure, with the stress falling heavily on character and mood. In general the difficulty with strict emphasis along these lines is that the film then requires, if not an exceptional character to galvanize each frame onwards to the next, at least an exceptional actor to convince the audience that the character is worth two hours of its time. Some plot usually seems advisable in either case, since one of the benefits of plot is to keep the viewer's attention by filling in the spaces between inspired moments. And *Teacher* is not exempt from this dictum, it being a film of meticulous intelligence rather than miraculous inspiration.

Be that as it may, for a large part of its running time, *Teacher* is lucky enough to have in the person of Samantha Eggar the exceptional actor needed. Ms. Eggar plays Alice Field, a transplanted Englishwoman, a naïve war-bride many years ago who was totally unprepared for the prairie life she agreed to become part of. Her role as a woman whose life is being gradually destroyed by the physical and spiritual barrenness of the Prairies is largely responsible for the film's drive and substance. Bud Cort exudes an infectious boyish charm as usual, and individual scenes are often engaging enough in themselves, but on the whole the sections that are not informed by Ms. Eggar's presence, whether she is on-screen or not, seem comparatively lightweight. The film has personality; she gives it character. In Max Braithwaite's book from which the movie was adapted, Alice Field is a minor character who functions primarily as a focus for the young teacher's sexual desire. The filmmakers deepened the impact of the film when they shrewdly enlarged her role. In fact, considering the steep downhill course the film takes promptly after Mrs. Field leaves, one can reasonably deduce that she was basic to the conception of the film. It seems as if no one quite knew what to do or where to go following her departure.

I don't think I shall forget for a long while the final shot of Alice Field, slumped on her mare and bundled against the cold, about to be led by her husband back to the life she had tried to run away from. Her face and eyes express such a haunting all-is-lost horror of her lot and a recognition that for her there will likely never be anything else.

After this last shot of Mrs. Field, the film changes radically in tone—from a kind of bitter-sweet gravity to unregenerate flippancy—and in attitude to the peripheral characters. In Willowgreen we find a stifling environment populated by unbending, unfeeling farmers. Throughout most of the film, Narizzano presents these people without condescension, mockery, or antipathy. At one point Mrs. Field suggests that perhaps a person has to be unfeeling merely to survive in this climate. This ability to consider the other person's point of view, voiced by the one who is suffering most from that point of view, is an indication of remarkable fairness on the part of Narizzano and Jim DeFelice, the screenwriter. Towards the end of the film, however, this fairness is peremptorily jettisoned in favour of easy laughs as character gives way to caricature. A school inspector of the inflexible Gradgrind type arrives in Willowgreen to inspect Max Brown's school. Right from the start the inspector is made to look ridiculous; he is a fool and a buffoon. He rants and raves about the poor quality of Max's teaching, about the sloppiness of Max's living quarters, about Max's incompetence in general, and on and on. Finally, Max challenges the inspector and in so doing wins the respect and affection of his students (which leads logically into the aforementioned sentimentality of the ending).

It is unfortunate that the film opts for such facile humour at the end when it strived so hard for nobility earlier. The descent into buffoonery is especially disastrous since the whole project teeters precariously close to cliché in the first place, cliché with a uniquely Canadian flavour. True to form, we have a sensitive individual (Samantha Eggar) who desires only to escape the harsh environment and the narrow people the environment has created; we have the palpable presence of the environment itself: if not overtly hostile at least aggressively unhelpful to its human inhabitants. This latter theme is capsulized in a single shot of Max's one-room schoolhouse standing vulnerably alone in long-shot amidst the endless vistas of snow-swept prairie. In such a land the mere fact of survival is of paramount importance. Several literary critics, Margaret Atwood foremost among them, see this struggle for survival as the predominant theme in Canadian literature. By the seventies, however, this theme would seem to have been worked to death. In fact, one gets the impression that setting the film in the middle of the Depression was a canny manoeuvre on the part of the filmmakers to avoid the accusation that they were wantonly indulging in an anachronistic view of life. The fact that this strategy is not particularly effective is another matter. The danger of the cliché is never entirely absent, but what helps the film transcend its basic situation is the filmmakers' careful depiction of, and humanizing compassion for, their characters, which animates them. A cliché is a dead thing. Characters who are created truly alive can never wholeheartedly contribute to cliché. In the final analysis, *Why Shoot the Teacher?* is not wholly successful, but it is an honourable failure and an interesting and entertaining film. ●

It is unfortunate that the film opts for such facile humour at the end when it strived so hard for nobility earlier.

THE WEREWOLF OF WASHINGTON

DIRECTED BY MILTON MOSES GINSBERG

by Charles T. Gregory

As a metaphor for corruption why not the curse of lycanthropy? Could that not describe the secret deeds of clean-cut successes like Jeb Magruder and John Dean better than their books full of clichés about materialism, bad companions, following orders, etc.?

Yet back in 1973 few audiences—or movie distributors—could evidently accept a low budget but well-made horror movie about a nice young executive-type named Jack Whittier (!) who, after fleeing to Hungary to break off a love affair with the President's daughter, is bitten by a werewolf. Disdaining the Hungarians' warnings as "red" tricks, and mistaking their pentagram sign as indicative of Pentagon activity, Jack, the All-American Boy (played brilliantly by Dean Stockwell with even bushier eyebrows than usual), accepts his leader's call to duty as assistant White House press secretary. As a press secretary he is mildly successful, contributing a few insulting hyperboles to the vice-presidential diatribes against the media; but as a werewolf he is, at first, an enormously effective politician, first killing the outspoken wife (Martha Mitchell type) of a doubtful Supreme Court candidate, and then the female owner of an opposition newspaper (Katherine Graham and her Washington Post). Unfortunately, the most effective weapons run amok, and the White House Werewolf eventually attacks basement guards, the President's daughter, and even the President (Biff McGuire) himself. The daughter tearfully dispatches poor Jack with a silver bullet, and the movie ends with lycanthropy spreading through the White House. We hear moonlit howls mixed with a presidential address to the nation: "At night I roam the silent empty corridors of the White House..."

The film was apparently never distributed in the United States, fearful executives trembling before the imagined wrath of Spiro Agnew, Charles Colson, and Howard Hunt. There was some belated recognition at the 1974 London Film Festival, where it was hailed as the *Dr. Strangelove* of "Watergate," which somehow trivializes both the scandal and the great Kubrick movie which looks more realistic each year. Perhaps the real reasons why American distributors rejected the film were that it was (1) not as gory or erotic as the average horror film; (2) the political references were too obscure, sophisticated or uncomfortable to be "funny;" and (3) the film has the innocent slapstick slickness of material made before the Senator Ervin TV hearings and the famous Dean testimony, or Nixon standing up in a major speech to declare that he was not a crook.

Writer/director Milton Moses Ginsberg can honestly claim to have been ahead of his time. There are moments that reveal with unconscious prescience the psychology of the real White House: the slavish obedience to presidential will, presidential unwillingness to hear his aide confess to being a werewolf, and the presence of the mysterious Dr. Kiss making monster experiments in the White House basement.

Yet because the film only begins to be as outrageous as reality, it pleases more on the level of a TV sketch. It has too much "taste" to be as gross as a Roger Corman quickie might have been if Corman followed political fads as crassly as he does other exploitative social material. The film's 1976 debut in London during an exceedingly bland American election campaign did, however, give the film a special verve that it otherwise might have lacked—Ginsberg is neither gross enough nor knowledgeable enough about Washington society to create forceful caricatures.

Two roles, however, are exempt from the latter criticism. Clifton James plays an aggressive Attorney General who "wants to win back the minds and hearts of the American people" by arresting everybody. He rants at the media and the Black Panthers and the hippies who have probably invented the "werewolf of Washington" about which the press is constantly harrassing him. James, an actor easily given to excess, has only short scenes, which lend more credibility to his caricature. His blundering bully wanders through the movie exuding an hilarious, ignorant grossness which seems just right for the material. Biff McGuire, as the nameless President who keeps wanting to make everything perfectly clear, has a football on his desk and the Washington Redskins' game on his TV, refuses to pay attention to his aide's social disease, and makes word flubs about "withdrawing truth" (instead of troops) from Vietnam. But he is no Nixon look-alike relying on that figure to kick around. For example, while boarding a helicopter he uses the famous LBJ quote, "They're all my helicopters, son," to reply to Jack's confusion over which helicopter to board. With his genial opacity, his love of high level bonhomie, and his general clumsiness he could also be Gerald Ford—or Chevy Chase.

Political satire combined with a parody of the lycanthropic sub-genre of horror films seems more metaphorically appropriate now than when the film was released in 1973. Dr. Kiss (Michael Dunn), the midget mad scientist, who befriends the werewolf and holds conferences with the President in a mock locker room, must have seemed as impossible as the characters in Philip Roth's Orwellian satire *Our Gang*, which received so many negative reviews in 1971. Now he seems far more logical than the Attorney General in the film who connects a black demonstrator with the Black Panther Party and therefore concludes that he must be the werewolf because, well, panthers are sort of like wolves... In other words, the only rational people in the film are the old Hungarians who warn about werewolves; in the real world the only rational people are those who warn of madness in the White House. This film had no box office star the equal of James Coburn to facilitate distribution as did Theodore Flicker's wild political satire *The President's Analyst*, and so it died. It might have helped us cope with the continual howls from the White House. ●

Credits

Valentino
A United Artist release. Producers: Irwin Winkler and Robert Chartoff. Director: Ken Russell. Screenplay: Ken Russell and Mardik Martin. Associate Producer: Harry Ben. Music: Ferde Grofe and Stanley Black. Photography: Peter Suschitsky. Art Director: Philip Harrison. Costumes: Shirley Russell. Editor: Stuart Baird. Cast: Rudolf Nureyev, Leslie Caron, Michelle Phillips, Carol Kane, Felicity Kendal, Seymour Cassel.

15 Nov
An Association Coopérative de Productions Audio-visuelles release. Producer: Bernard Lalonde. Directors: Hughes Mignault and Ronald Brault. Photography: Ronald Brault, André Gagnon, Louis de Ernsted, Bruno Carrière, Michel Brault, Martin Duckworth, Pierre Duceppe, Daniel Jobin, George Jardon. Editor: Annick de Bellefeuille. Sound Editing: André Corriveau. Sound: Hugues Mignault, Jean Rival. Music: Conventum.

Stroszek
A Werner Herzog Filmproduction / Skellig Edition. Written and Directed by Werner Herzog. Photography: Thomas Mauch. Assistant Director: Ed Lachmann. Sound: Maymo Henry Heyder and Peter van Anft. Editor: Beate Mainka-Jellinghaus. Music: Chet Atkins, Sonny Terry. Cast: Bruno S., Eva Mattes, Clemens Scheitz.

Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort
A Cinak (Montréal), Filmoblic and Institut national de l'audiovisuel (Paris) collaboration. Director: Jean-Pierre Lefebvre. Screenplay: Jean-Pierre Lefebvre and Mireille Amiel. Photography: Guy Dufaux. Cast: Marcel Sabourin, Anouk Ferjac, Myriam Boyer, Roger Blin, Germaine Delbat.

Outrageous
A Film Consortium of Canada Inc. release. Producers: William Marshall, Hendrick J. Van Der Kolk. Direction and screenplay: Richard Benner. Director of Photography: James. B. Kelly. Editor: George Appleby. Sound: Doug Ganton. Music: Paul Hoffert. Cast: Craig Russell, Hollis McLaren, Richert Easley, Allan Moyle.

Why Shoot the Teacher?
An Ambassador Films release. Producer: Lawrence Hertzog. Director: Silvio Narizzano. Screenplay: Jim DeFelice. Photography: Marc Champion. Sound: Richard Lightstone. Executive Producer: Fil Fraser. Cast: Bud Cort, Samantha Eggar, Gary Reinike, John Friesen, Michael J. Reynolds.

The Werewolf of Washington
A Diplomat release of a Millco Production. Producer: Nina Shulman. Direction and Screenplay: Milton Moses Ginsberg. Associate Producer: Stephen Miller. Cast: Dean Stockwell, Biff McGuire, Clifton James, Michael Dunn.

Charles Gregory teaches film at California State University in Sacramento.

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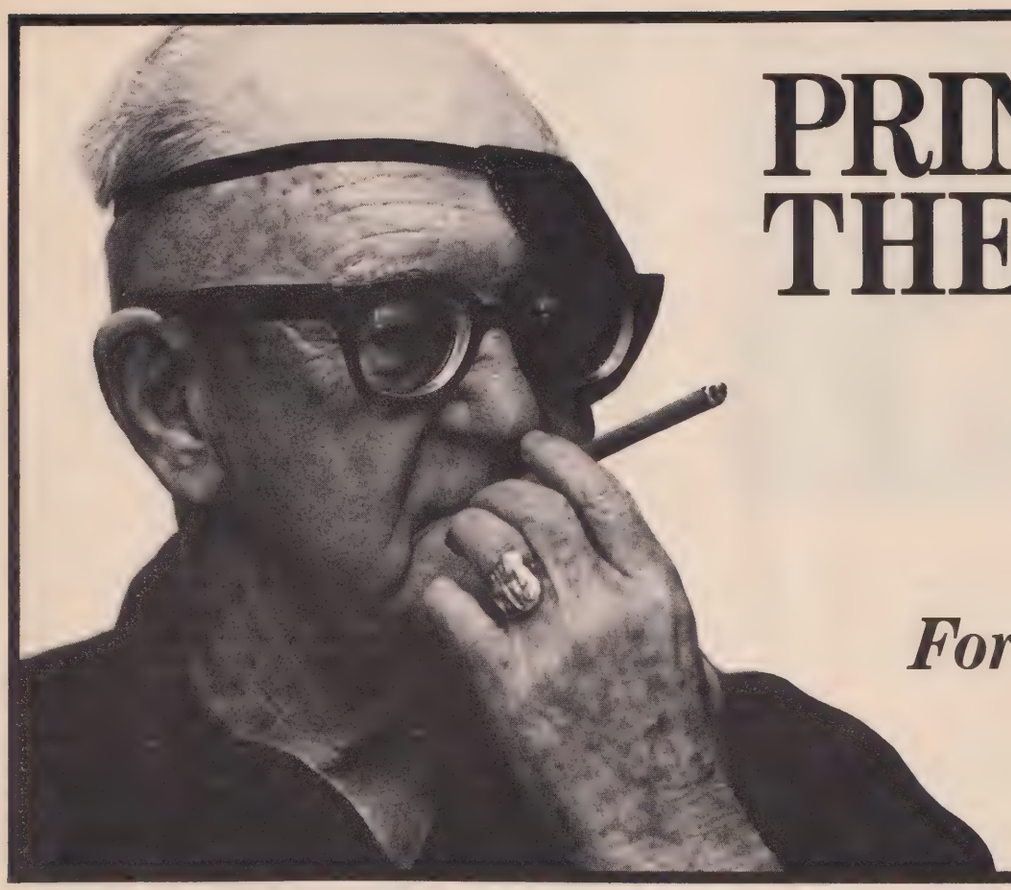

PRINT THE FACT

For and against the films of John Ford

by Pierre Greenfield

It is this article's contention that John Ford is, of all major American directors, the one whose work is in most urgent need of reassessment. Lip-service is widely paid to his greatness, but little concrete of an intelligent nature is offered as to why his films are great. What *is* offered, all too often, is rightist rhetoric of the most sentimental kind, an exposition of Fordian philosophy without any serious justification of it. Critics who would vehemently deny conservative beliefs themselves accept the Fordian view quite blithely, blatantly ignoring the moral and political questions raised. Looking, for instance, at John Baxter's book on the director, one finds Baxter willing to concede that Ford's depiction of Indians or Negroes is, in many films, reactionary or downright insulting; but he doesn't seem to think the films are damaged by this, or that Ford might be regarded (and then charitably) as a foolish or misguided man. In fairness to Baxter, he does acknowledge that these defects exist; what he doesn't do is take the obvious next step and state these faults to be grave ones.

What needs to be said, loudly, is that more of Ford's alleged masterpieces turn out to be slight, tedious or plain bad than anyone else's. It must hastily be added, however, equally loudly, that in the huge Fordian *oeuvre,* masterpieces certainly exist, and that these are insufficiently admired. It is further true that the essence of Ford's greatest films—I am thinking especially of *The Searchers* and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*—lies in the manner in which they correct or repudiate most of his work, representing an artist who has achieved his fullest maturity through pain after avoiding it far too long. It has been widely commented that Ford, growing old, saw most of his ideals wither and die. What has not been said is that this loss of innocence, while distressing, was ultimately a good thing. Too many of his ideals, if his films of the Thirties and Forties are proof, were naïve or false. Ford, to be brutal, ducked the truth too often in a long career, more than an artist of his talent ever should have. What we get in most of his films isn't idealism, by any civilised standard, but a gross pandering to bourgeois complacency.

Fort Apache is a particularly nauseating example. Thursday's Last Stand—based, obviously, on Custer's—becomes an heroic act after all, rather than the bloody disaster it actually is. True, Thursday is shown as an egomaniac boor, a hothead martinet unconcerned with human life (if less unsympathetic than the lunatic Custer about whom Ford, as later remarks show, had no illusions); but Ford's innate conformism betrays itself at the end. An army needs its heroes, he tells us, and even if Thursday is a bastard, he is still the boss, which is what counts. His men instantly and willingly obey an insane order and go to certain death because, and only because, a commanding officer has decreed it. It is clear from the tone of the film (and from Ford's remarks in Peter Bogdanovich's interview-book) that no irony is intended, and certainly no criticism. For Ford, Thursday's cruel idiocy contains something glorious. It is quite clear that the film endorses the obeying of all orders, whatever the circumstances. Coincidentally enough, the film appeared while people were saying similar things at Nuremberg.

What is remarkable is not that Ford thought he could get away with this dangerous nonsense (he doubtless never thought about it in such terms) but simply that, for most critics, he did. A distastefully simplistic, not to say jingoistic, view of things is inherent in his work up to the end of the Forties and, in general, this element, for all its happy disappearance thereafter, has been ignored, excused or even praised. Sometimes, admittedly, sheer skill on Ford's part allows him to win us over to things we might normally cringe at, such as the depiction of Trooper Smith in *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon.* Given the old soldier's situation (once a high-ranking Confederate, he has, after defeat, rejoined the ranks pseudonymously in the lowest of positions) can anyone doubt it would, in reality, be hellish? Ford's handling of the idea—the trooper dies a hero's death and is buried with full honours by his admiring former enemies—has

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How Green Was My Valley

nothing to do with a realistic view of human nature (imagine a Samuel Fuller version), but is entirely typical. No one is questioning Ford's sincerity in his optimistic view (that's why the corny idea works) but this kind of naïveté is not what one expects of a major artist.

Ford's narratives, all too often, have no emotional or moral shading whatever. The good are good, the bad bad, and transgressions between the two are punishable by death. In *My Darling Clementine,* Doc Holliday has virtually no peccadilloes beyond being a professional gambler and a fast draw, but he still stops a bullet at the end. Gone completely is history's fatalistic alcoholic, and so, too, is just about every other known fact about the O.K. Corral shoot-out. Even the date given is a year out. As a true story, the film is an even more absurd tissue of fictions than Frank Perry's *Doc,* although it is also, one readily admits, much less tedious. Of course, there is no particular reason why a film based on real incidents should follow the facts, unless, like *Doc,* it makes a big thing about how realistic it is; and, accepted as a conventional oater, *Clementine* is very entertaining, though it has been heftily overrated. (I agree that the superb sequence of the open-air dance which assimilates Wyatt Earp into Tombstone society belongs in a masterpiece, but its very superiority to the rest indicates that it isn't actually in one). What is significant is that Ford himself, in the Bogdanovich book, seems to have taken pride in how accurate the film was. Earp himself told Ford how things happened. Then near death, Earp was a notorious teller of tall tales about himself, but Ford believed him and still did thirty-odd years later, by which time he was hardly an impressionable kid. Authority is invariably respected in most Ford films, however dubious it may be.

There are worse examples of this forelock-touching. The cavalry trilogy is distinctly anti-individualist, suggesting strongly that Ford had little time for any conscripted soul not addicted to boozing, fist-fights and the less subtle forms of Irish humour. The military unit is what counts for him, not the people in it. In real life, Ford was a navy man, anyway; and, as it chances, the very worst of his phoney paens to the services is *They Were Expendable,* which does its damnedest to turn Douglas MacArthur into some kind of deity, ignoring the actual facts of his evacuation from the Philippines and giving him glory he never merited. Let it be added that Ford reaches his questionable ends by the most tedious of means; the careful avoidance of mentioning MacArthur by name, the reverential closeups from chest-level, the waxwork poses the actor, Robert Barratt, is compelled to strike, all these are clichés insulting to a modern audience.

So many of Ford's films up to the final phase of his career are flawed by sogginess and torpor. One can go quietly bananas enduring the endless Victor McLaglen-Pedro Armendariz routines in *Fort Apache,* or the coy romance in

"More of Ford's alleged masterpieces turn out to be slight, tedious or plain bad than anyone else's..."

the same film between John Agar and cute Shirley Temple, who plays Miss Philadelphia Thursday, a name *not* included for comic relief. *How Green Was My Valley,* the film that, astoundingly, won most of the Oscars in a year that saw *Citizen Kane,* is a merciless farrago of sugar and spice and all things false, the Rhondda community including such Welsh types as Walter Pidgeon (Canadian), Roddy McDowall (Anglo-American) and a large number of Irish players—Maureen O'Hara, Sarah Allgood, even Barry Fitzgerald. The Morgan paterfamilias is played by Donald Crisp, a Scot, and it was to his memories of turn-of-the-century family life, not those of Rhys Williams, the only actual Welshman in the cast, that Ford turned for "authenticity". Even allowing for all this, not to mention the remarkable affluence of the supposedly-impoverished Morgans, who seem to have a bed apiece (rare enough in the Rhondda today), or the fact that a Californian fruit-growing valley is at least a thousand times more picturesque than a Welsh coal-mining one, what is the film supposed to be about? The film has no solid plot, its focus switches (we start off seeing everything through the eyes of little Huw, which is boring, but switch to the love-life of Angharad, which is worse), and if what Ford was after was a detailed portrait of family solidarity under stress, why didn't he take some care to present this accurately, or at least believably? Still widely regarded as a major film (though not in Wales, where it was nearly laughed off the screen at a 1967 revival I attended), *Valley* is a sloppy mess. With Pidgeon playing a clergyman, it is also extremely sanctimonious.

Religion is, not unnaturally, a major concern of this most Catholic filmmaker, and his handling of it can be pleasurable, but often is embarrassing instead. *The Informer,* with its blind seer, its forgiving matriarch and, of course, its very plot of Easter betrayal (don't forget, as if Ford would let you, that famed shot of Gyppo with his arms outstretched), is by now notorious, but one can cite other examples. The transforming of *Mary of Scotland* from murderous, promiscuous and stupid bitch to a wronged "Madonna of the moors," in Andrew Sarris's phrase, is indeed miraculous, though it mightn't matter were the film less dull. *The Fugitive* scrupulously cleans up Graham Greene's whiskey-priest, and his relationship with the woman (a reverentially-lit Dolores del Rio) is on an altogether loftier plane. Still, the film is interesting in its own right, which can't be said for the incredible *Three Godfathers,* where a reasonably interesting story-line is invested with every possible cliché. No chance for the introduction of glutinous sentiment is ignored; the elaborate religious symbolism imposed by Ford on the plot would be offensive if it weren't so patently absurd. The pattern of Biblical references—the affinity of the three ruthless bandits (actually about as tough as marshmallows) to the Magi; the ordeal by hunger and thirst in the desert; the way in which the Bible is made to point the way of salvation absolutely literally; and, of course, the fact that the town the trinity of heroic villains is trying to reach is called New Jerusalem — is presented straightfaced, without irony, wit or much consistency, either. Ford cheats outrageously at the climax, where, by any sense, the one surviving godfather, John Wayne, is surely supposed to be killed by the townsfolk, who think he has murdered the child he has actually saved. A reluctance to polish off the Duke robs the tale of its tragic irony and,

Grapes of Wrath

incidentally, condemns us to an extended epilogue in which Wayne is again said to be a good chap basically, so that his career as a thief and gunman won't stand in the way of a pardon.

I have written at length of Ford's defects, which seem to me as grievous as they are little-mentioned. Now, at last, the time comes to speak of his strengths, which have but little to do with the oft-cited subjects of patriotism, camaraderie, family life and affiliation to those mysterious forces called "the old values." Did some private emotional change come over Ford in the 1950s, some realization of how dimly he had perceived human nature—or, at least, human unpleasantness—in most of his films hitherto? An awareness of pain, of injustice becomes more manifest in the last films of his long career. Not that Ford could not present us with profoundly moving portraits of complex and realistic suffering at earlier times—*The Grapes Of Wrath,* that intriguing tribute to committed Communists by an arch-conservative, being the obvious example; but the fact remains that, for most of the time in the Thirties and Forties, he *did* not, choosing instead to use his talents in manufacturing, with varying degrees of slickness, routine commercial enterprises whose occasional charms have rarely much realism in them.

The Informer

"In the huge Fordian oeuvre, masterpieces certainly exist, and these are insufficiently admired."

Religion, the cause of so much previous distress, is part of a useful transition-point. In *Wagonmaster,* which appeared in 1950, the Mormons are treated with absolute respect ("I don't have horns, neither," remarks Ward Bond as their leader, explaining he doesn't have hundreds of wives) and so, significantly, are the Indians encountered en route. It is true to say that Ford gave needed employment to more Negroes and Indians than most directors in the Thirties and Forties, but he also depicted these races in an unmistakeably, if unwittingly, condescending manner. Before *Wagonmaster,* the redskins have no function other than to perpetrate unmentionable atrocities and get plugged in droves by Wayne and friends. The 1950 film, however, approaches them, if cautiously, with interest and amity. Similarly, *The Sun Shines Bright* in 1954 offers us rather less stereotyped blacks than its original, *Judge Priest.* Despite the stress on Catholic ritual in *The Quiet Man,* there is no doubt that the most intelligent character in the film is the much put-upon Protestant vicar, Mr. Playfair. This film has the charming scene where Fr. Lonergan (Ward Bond again) persuades his flock to pose as Protestants to impress Playfair's visiting bishop, and while one's mind does boggle a bit considering how a modern Irish audience might react, it does point to the complexity of Ford's rich and strange last film, *Seven Women.* The broadening of tolerance leads us quickly to *Mr. Roberts,* which plainly states that there is more to wartime heroism than fighting and also, very importantly, presents us with a commander who is almost wholly despicable. The one, small measure of humanity afforded James Cagney's Captain is that he has become a petty tyrant as a result of being bullied when young by corrupt authorities.

"And thus we move to Ford's great films, which show a many-sided vision of humanity that perhaps only the wisdom of age could give him."

And thus we move to Ford's great films, which show a many-sided vision of humanity that perhaps only the wisdom of age could give him. If Ford is to be regarded as a great director, then it is not because he made *Stagecoach* or *Young Mr. Lincoln* or *The Informer* or *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon* or *The Long Voyage Home,* but because he made *The Searchers* and, more especially, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance.* The latter is a perfect, beautiful western, and a very profound one, still widely underrated. *The Searchers,* at least, is now generally much admired, although it falls just short of perfection, due to the brief but bafflingly silly scenes involving Vera Miles's hayseed would-be lover, whom we are seriously supposed to regard as a romantic rival for Jeffery Hunter's Martin Pawley. In both

My Darling Clementine

films, Ford looks squarely at everything he has ever believed in. He is not afraid to find things wanting, and it is therein that the greatness finally lies. He gives John Wayne two of the most archtypal parts of his career, but behind the valour, honesty, nobility and self-denying chivalry of Tom Doniphon (in *Liberty Valance*) and Ethan Edwards (in *The Searchers*), there are other forces. Tom, for all his likeable or admirable qualities, is an anachronism, a man of violence; Ethan is something darker again, a man whose obsessiveness makes him sublimate his passions, so that justice turns into mere vengeance and courage becomes psychopathy. Fordian heroism shows the other side of its face. But, as all too few commentators have said, there is more to this than an acknowledgement, however tragic and honest, of a fatal flaw in hitherto-held ideals. There is also a recognition of alternatives, of change. This is particularly true of *Liberty Valance,* which presents two opposed views with absolute fairness and refuses to come down on either side. It is misleading to suggest, as Bogdanovich does, that Ford is finally on the side of the reactionary Doniphon and not the progressive, pacifist lawyer, Stoddard (James Stewart). This might have been the case had Ford made the film 15 years earlier than 1962, and it would have been, as Bogdanovich does not seem to realise, a major shortcoming. Baxter goes further and suggests that Ford is positively against Stoddard and what he stands for; which means, as Baxter does not add, that he is *for* mob violence and killing and against law and learning. This is nonsense.

Pernicious nonsense, too, as it ignores the beautiful complexity of the film, its awareness that real life isn't simple. Of course, Ford has regrets about the passing of Doniphon, his reduction from leader of the Shinbone community to a broken, bankrupt, forgotten nonentity. But the backward-looking Tom has carried the seeds of his own destruction, and his secret shooting of the gunman Valance (Lee Marvin) is also a kind of suicide. By refusing the future, Tom has, paradoxically, killed the past, for this archetypal straight-shooter has killed Valance not in self-defence, nor in a fair gunfight, but in cold blood with a powerful rifle at close range, while he was hidden and unannounced and Valance in full public view. The myth of the west has been laid bare, and Tom admits this: "It was murder," he tells Stoddard, who has unwittingly taken credit for the deed, his own shot at Valance having missed by a mile. By a terrible, tragic multiple irony, Tom has, in destroying his own ideals of frontier ruggedness, made free the path for a new world that he rejects utterly and which must, perforce, reject him. After revealing the truth to Stoddard, Tom symbolically destroys his own home. Stoddard marries Tom's girl, Hallie, and goes on to international renown as a reformer and diplomat. After over 20 years, he returns to Shinbone and tells the truth to the journalist who holds his own old job on the local newspaper. The true story, however, is not printed.

"In both films, Ford looks squarely at everything he has ever believed in. He is not afraid to find things wanting, and it is therein that the greatness finally lies."

Of course, Ford finds things to criticise in the civilisation that Stoddard and his kind impose on the west, but it is recognised that the west had to be changed, and that the change was an improvement. This is symbolised most tenderly in the scene where Stoddard wins Hallie's love by teaching her to read. It is better to be educated than primitive, just as gardens are preferable to wildernesses. The force of history is against the Tom Doniphons of this world and that, beyond question, is how things simply are. There is no suggestion at all that Stoddard's intellectual pacifism is not admirable, nor is it implied that he is not wholly genuine. Ford rigorously avoids giving us an easy way to decide our sympathies. True, Hallie clearly still loves Tom, or at least his memory, but she equally clearly loves Stoddard. Tom represents what is, Stoddard what can be; Hallie invests in the future. The irony of the film's ending—Stoddard, to his horror, learns that in civilised twentieth-century Shinbone, he is still known, not as a liberal reformer, but as the man who shot Liberty Valance—is a very sad one, showing that one can never quite eradicate the wilderness from the garden. The reporter, learning the truth, famously tells Stoddard that in the west they "print the legend;" as only Bogdanovich has pointed out, Ford instead prints the fact. This he does too in *The Searchers.* He has at last realised that the facts are more important.

The quest of Ethan Edwards and the half-breed Martin Pawley for Ethan's niece, a young child kidnapped by the Indian chief, Scar, is, like all quests, an odyssey of self-discovery. The heroic Ethan learns the truths about himself he has always avoided, just as Ford acknowledges the bitter underside of the American Dream. The diminutive Mr. Jorgenson remarks that the real cause of carnage wasn't just the Indians, "It was this land;" the previously-deified Seventh Cavalry are revealed as butchers (the regiment is never named, but the colours and marching-song are unmistakeable); and Ethan gradually comes to realise his moral inferiority not only to the initially-despised Martin, but also to the terrifying Scar. Authority-figures lack their old charisma. Church and army are united in the same man, the highly ambiguous Sam Clayton (Ward Bond yet once more), who calls himself the "Reverend Major" and is first disturbing (sitting absolutely erect in the saddle, his poker-back emphasised by the huge, thin stovepipe hat fixed to his head) and finally ridiculous, immobilised by an arrow in the rump. Miscegenation is seen—boldly for the Fifties—as fine and beautiful, and Ethan's acceptance of this saves his sanity and his soul. Certainly, Ford has produced no moment more thrilling than Ethan's final meeting with his niece, the child of the woman he loved and lost for much the same reason Tom Doniphon lost Hallie. By this time, Ethan has become so demented that, thinking her irredeemably defiled by ten years (or however many it is; Ford makes the time-scale deliberately vague, to emphasise the epic nature of the search) in an Indian camp, he has sworn to kill the girl. But the things he has seen *have* changed Ethan, and he takes her tenderly in his arms.

The man of war has found peace at last; but it is lonely. As the door of the house swings shut on him forever in the film's justly-famed last shot, Ethan is swallowed up into the wilderness beyond. For Ford, too, there is no going back.

"For Ford, too, there is no going back. The conformity of the alleged golden years is banished."

The Searchers

The conformity of the alleged golden years is banished. The "officers and gentlemen" of *Donovan's Reef* are ageing, boozed-up brawlers whose authority-figure, Dr. Dedham, has fled America to rear a brood of illegitimate children. Our brief glimpse of Bostonian society (i.e. America) shows it to be well worth fleeing, a point already made in *The Last Hurrah,* where the past is outmoded, but the future null. Roguish Frank Skeffington cannot possibly win his mayoral campaign, but his successor is an idiotic puppet. War is bloodier than ever in Ford's segment of *How the West Was Won* (where Russ Tamblyn's passing remark that the river has turned pink with blood chills us as no battle-scene could) and in *The Horse Soldiers,* where the ardent militarist (Wayne) is less sympathetic or sensible than the utterly cynical but somewhat more constructive doctor (William Holden). One cannot imagine the sheer toughness of this film coming from Ford in the Forties; how much more mature this film's view of military life seems, how much more acute its sense of pain and waste. The soldier who prefers to die than face Andersonville prison camp could not exist in the earlier films, for the old Ford could never admit that such a place could exist, even in wartime, in his beloved America.

The most obvious repudiation of the past comes in *Cheyenne Autumn,* where the Indians are almost wholly sympathetic and the cavalry either misguided or evil, while Wyatt Earp, *Clementine*'s upright puritan, becomes a sly, bored trickster, passing his days playing poker with a notably seedier Doc Holliday and a Major Jeff Blair, a grotesque caricature of all the Southern aristocrats Ford once depicted so admiringly. The heroes are no longer heroic and in his last feature, the hallucinatingly idiosyncratic *Seven Women,* Ford's admiration goes not to the lady missionary, Miss Andrews (he is more sympathetic to her lesbianism, the result of a life without love, than to her religion), but to the profane atheist, Dr. Cartwright, a female version of the Holden character in *The Horse Soldiers.* Sentimentality is banished; the laws that govern Ford's final films are not the conventions of a society whose worth is taken for granted, but the moral decisions of brave individualists. Towards the end of his life, Ford opined that "if our ancestors could see us today, they'd be bloody ashamed;" hard words for an old traditionalist to say. But let us be thankful he found the courage to say them. It is for this courage in his final years that Ford deserves remembering.

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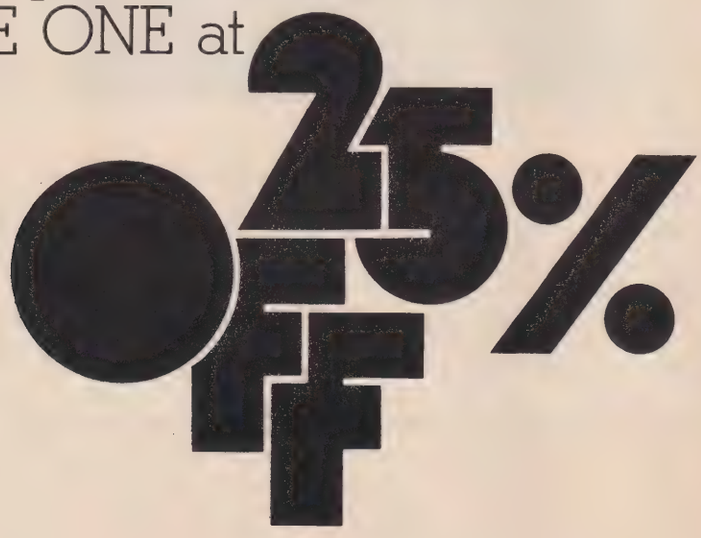

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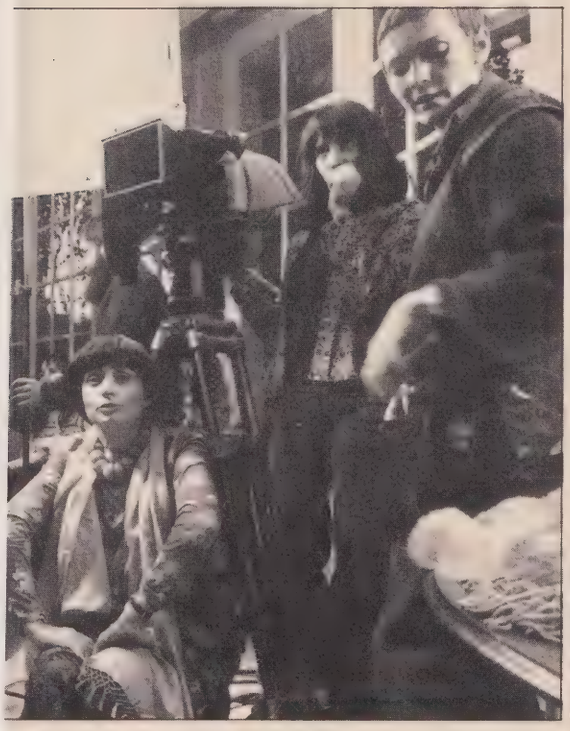
'S VARDA SINGS



Christophe Laurentin

AN INTERVIEW WITH YING YING WU

A short, round, energetic Agnes Varda greets me in her ground-floor house/office behind Montparnasse. Over breakfast she talks about her latest film; *L'Une chante, l'autre pas,* which she produced herself because potential producers were turned off by the fact that men had only minor roles. "It's a film with songs which also makes producers run away," she says.

Becoming a producer as well as director, scriptwriter, editor and songwriter is the logical step in her long, remarkable career. For over two decades, she has been involved in a vigorous struggle to make films with "an entirely different viewpoint." If *L'Une chante, l'autre pas* succeeds in overcoming the label of *cinéma marginal,* it will be due entirely to her tireless efforts to promote the film almost single-handedly.

Varda's first feature film, *La Pointe courte* (1954), was a neo-realistic chronicle edited by Alain Resnais about a fishing village and a couple taking stock of their marriage. Several shorts later, she made *Cléo de 5 à 7,* two hours in the life of a singer who thinks she is dying of cancer. Varda's best-known film, *Le Bonheur* (1966), tells the story of a happily married couple with two children, in which the husband falls in love with another woman. The film's idyllic mood is barely marred by the wife's suicide, and the other woman soon takes her place in this beautiful but cruel story. Soon afterward came *Les Créatures* with Catherine Deneuve and Michel Piccoli in a pseudo-science fiction story about a couple who meet an architect who controls other people's behaviour through a chess game. The use of color filters creates different levels of reality.

From 1967 to 1969, Varda lived in Los Angeles making a short about her hippie-artist uncle, Jean Varda, who lived on a Sausalito houseboat, and another about the Black Panthers during the Free Huey Newton controversy. She also made *Lion's Love,* about the Hollywood scene, with Warhol superstar Viva. Two years later, she worked with Bertolucci on the script of *Last Tango in Paris.* In 1975, she made a color feature documentary, *Daguerréotypes,* about the shopkeepers who live and work next to her on the rue Daguerre. She captures both the ordinary and magic moments in their lives with a genuine sense of affection.

Ying Ying Wu is a freelance writer living in Paris.

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AGNES VARDA SINGS

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Christophe Laurentin

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Ying Ying Wu is a freelance writer living in Paris.

"The idea that actors aren't puppets that you manipulate is important. This may not be normal, but it's natural."

This fondness for her characters is reflected in her new film, *L'Une chante, l'autre pas,* which underwent several metamorphoses when Varda took an active interest in the women's movement in 1971 and began to travel with women's groups. The original idea, a woman's dream, turned into a musical entitled *Mon corps est à moi* (My Body Belongs to Me) about three women living in Nice who run a contraception center. During this period, Varda gave birth to a son, Mathieu. She and her husband, filmmaker Jacques Demy (*Umbrellas of Cherbourg, Lola*), also have a daughter, Rosalie. Both children appear in *L'Une chante, l'autre pas.*

This film offers a new outlook for women for whom freedom is both a blessing and a curse. Valérie Mairesse is the exuberant Pauline, who decides at the age of 17 to become a singer, changing her name to Pomme. She helps her friend Suzanne, who at 22 already has two children and is pregnant again by her married photographer lover, Jerome, to get an abortion. In France in 1962, this is no easy task. Their lives take different directions afterward, and they don't meet again until ten years later at a demonstration supporting feminist lawyer Gisèle Halimi's defense of a young girl whose mother obtains an abortion for her. By now, Pomme has joined Orchidée, a group of three women musicians, and has fallen in love with Darius, an Iranian economist. Unable to continue singing in Iran, she returns to France to have their baby and to resume her career. Darius finally returns to Iran with their son, but not before Pomme, in one of the film's most poignant moments, asks him to make her pregnant again so they can each keep a child.

Suzanne, played by Thérèse Liotard, has a more traditional outlook. After her abortion, she returns to her parents' house and tries to earn her living by becoming a medical secretary. She moves to the south of France and runs a family planning center. She falls in love with a married pediatrician but waits until he divorces his wife two years later before she can accept his love and marry him. At the film's end, the issues are presented again by Suzanne's teen-aged daughter Marie and the different set of problems her generation will face.

After the final version was written, the long search for a producer and the actors and musicians began. Varda's own production company, Ciné-Tamaris, was created as a result of her attempts to find outside financing. When asked if the present economic crisis had anything to do with her difficulties, she replies, "It's always affected me in the same way. The *cinéma d'auteurs* has always been hard to do, by men and women. It hasn't changed for me; I've been in a crisis for 20 years. I made all my films with difficulty. Maybe not *Le Bonheur;* that's the only one I made somewhat easily. Free cinema is difficult. It has nothing to do with crises or with women."

She adds, *"L'Une chante, l'autre pas* expresses the idea that women's destiny is not around having children. That's an important part of life and of the film, but the film's issues also concern women who don't have and don't want children. The musicians, Orchidée, sing about happy pregnancies, but their songs are realistic and not dreamy or romantic." One song (lyrics by Varda) explores the joy of being pregnant, the pleasure of feeling like a bubble or a balloon. Another expresses the desire to break away from female stereotypes: "Not a nanny nor a granny nor a fanny, I am woman, I am me."

Varda spent a year preparing the production. She found an equal number of men and women to work on the film which she describes as a "more normal working relationship. It was more cheerful and more difficult at the same time, but not competitive." This was obvious when I went last autumn to a house in a Paris suburb along the Seine for the shooting of the film's final moments. The crew worked in a spirit of cheerful cooperation while Varda herself controlled the filming with enthusiastic vigor and total concentration.

The film was shot on location in the Paris region, the south of France and in Amsterdam and Iran. She also made an amusing six-minute short, *Plaisirs d'Amour en Iran,* about Pomme's and Darius' love affair in Iran and about the architecture, as a complement to the feature film.

At another meeting, Varda displays more of the intense, nervous side of her personality. Sitting in the pleasant chaos of her office and speaking abruptly between the constantly ringing telephone and various intruders, she continues her comments on *L'Une chante, l'autre pas.*

The casting turned into a chain-reaction affair among her actors: "I found Thérèse (Suzanne) who found Valérie (Pomme). Suzanne even found her lover, Jerome. It's a good idea to give a certain amount of autonomy to actors within a direction. I said to Suzanne, 'find yourself a guy who you think could play Jerome well.' He wasn't her lover lover, it wasn't the buddy system. The idea that actors aren't puppets that you manipulate is import-

Christophe Laurentin

"There are women who make men's films. I won't give any examples. That's their problem."

ant. This may not be normal, but it's natural."

In *L'Une chante, l'autre pas,* Varda depicts those ordinary moments of a woman's life which are seldom seen on the screen, such as the periods of loneliness Suzanne experiences between her affairs. The film explores the strength of female friendship through Suzanne's and Pomme's relationship which spans 15 years and which is sometimes linked by the postcards they send each other from different parts of the world. Says Varda, "Male friendship is totally reinforced on the screen with the great male couples. In French films, Delon-Belmondo, Trintignant-Yanne. In the United States, Newman-Redford, Nicholson-Brando. Friendship between women must either be homosexual or silly. Actually it's a real feeling which is quite strong, deep, valuable and positive. People seem to think that men and women can't have stable feelings for each other without it being erotic. Pomme says to Suzanne about the baby she's having, 'I wanted it, I'm free, both of us wanted it and you who experienced maternity as a failure, it's also for you.' It's beautiful and generous and at the same time, they're not having it together. A very nasty journalist who interviewed me on the radio and couldn't understand this said, 'Isn't Suzanne the real father of the baby?' I said, 'Listen, if you know two women who can procreate together, tell me quick because that might interest some women I know.'"

Varda has strong views on bringing up children. "In the film there are several proposals which aren't just liberating for women but another way of educating children. Every family is a society in miniature. Relationships between men and women are established within the family and toward children. There is no women's liberation without children's liberation. Women and children have to be decolonized. Men set up the rules of the game and are caught in their own trap.

"I strongly believe in a paternal instinct as deep and as tender as maternal love. The idea that mothers are better than fathers is a lot of bunk. Sometimes I find that men who take care of their children do everything very well and their kids love it. That's what's in the film. I don't give advice or invent theories. Most of the proposals are initiated by Pomme who suggests another look at relationships with men and children—for example, the non-possessiveness of children which is a sacred notion. They're my kids and I'm going to keep them. But they aren't my kids, they're our kids and he can keep them as well. That's why the film opens up toward men. Just because they don't have the babies doesn't mean they're not allowed to take care of them."

The film also expresses the long overdue notion of the joy of being a woman, "le bonheur d'être femme," not only through Suzanne and Pomme but through the other women in the film who participate in a women's forum in Amsterdam, who come to the family planning center and who watch Orchidée perform. These ordinary women are transfixed and transformed by their exposure to positive, constructive self-images. Audience reaction has also been gratifying. Varda describes an incident outside a Paris cinema when a woman accosted her with tears in her eyes saying, "I'm in the same situation with my husband as in the film. I'm not a particularly good mother and can't work with the child so we decided that my husband should take it. Everyone I know has made me feel guilty for abandoning my child. Your film has given me the courage to face the situation."

Varda explains her feelings about the negative images of women in films today, even by women filmmakers: "It seems normal that when you start out, your first statement is a scream, a revolt, a complaint. It's the very principle of decolonization. In every colonized country, people started by singing their complaints and their suffering. Often when young women are in the process of expressing themselves, it's a way of beginning to say, 'Here's how I've suffered.' It's completely necessary in order to become liberated. Women haven't opened their mouths during fifty years of cinema, so let them scream. Being positive is a privilege and is also maturity. Happiness is much more acute when you know what happiness and anguish are."

When asked about women directors who make male-oriented action films, such as Lina Wertmüller, Varda is quick to reply, "I don't criticize other women directors because it's too easy. You can't divide women into they're good or they're not. For me, among filmmakers, there are good ones and bad ones, women as well. There are women who make men's films. I won't give any examples. That's their problem."

Varda has only one comment for young women filmmakers: "All I know is that you absolutely have to fight. You have to send scripts everywhere and leave them with every agent. The more you send out, the better your chances. You have to do it in numbers like a demonstration. That's all there is. It's a matter of conviction."

Monty

Lash

Jim Christy

Monty, Lash and Me

by
Jim Christy

I've been thinking of him lately and what got me started was, of all things, a book review, about the last thing I would have connected with him. The book was a biography of Montgomery Clift and it was illustrated with a still of Monty from *Red River,* looking like nothing so much as a Polk Street cowboy. So, I started thinking about him. I mean old Lash Larue and what he had told me that time in Miami Beach.

Still, I wouldn't be writing this except that just this morning I happened to be visiting somebody and they had a big book all about western movies. I looked him up to see how they treated him and as usual it was unfairly and with error. All it said was a guy named Al "Lash" Larue made some cheapo movies and vanished for 20 years only to be heard from again in 1965 when he walked up to a cop in Miami Beach and pleaded, "Shoot me, buddy. Put me out of my misery."

What a bunch of crap. I know, I was there.

I was still a teenager and I was hanging around South Beach having a ball. Nothing to do but lie on the beach, chase girls and associate with an assortment of characters who always had stories to tell and a bottle to drink while they told them. There was, first of all, Baseball George and his lecherous girlfriend Carmen; there was George Lenart, an old alligator wrestler; Flossie, star of the Yiddish vaudeville in days gone by; a couple of winos named Maurice and Red; and various others who spent their time at the dog track and the Surf Bar.

There always seemed to be enough money, and how that strange situation came to pass I really don't know. (Yes, I do. But that's another story.)

Jim Christy is a Toronto writer. His book of poetry, *Palatine Cat,* was recently published by Four Humours Press.

It was February and one day it was particularly hot on the beach and I wandered over to the rooming house that George Lenart ran at 329 Ocean Drive. The place used to be the city jail and before that it was owned by Al Capone himself. It's gone now, like all the others, replaced by pastel medium-rises with aluminum chairs bolted to the patio out front. It was always open house and you knew, even if George wasn't around, that you could help yourself to a Miller High Life and make yourself at home.

I did just that and sat at the oilcloth-covered kitchen table and looked at the Miami *Herald.* I hadn't seen a paper in a week. The front page was filled with Selma, Alabama, the Cubans overrunning Miami and a couple of grisly murders. The President was saying he wasn't going to have anything more to do with Vietnam. Uh, huh.

I almost missed it, just a line or two on page 26. Former film star and idol to thousands of kids, Lash Larue had been arrested for drunk and vagrancy. Well, damn. I had been one of those thousands who had idolized old Lash. I had watched his movies in the dark of the Colonial Theatre in South Philadelphia and lain on my bed reading about his adventures in Lash Larue comic books. The reason I liked him was that he was unlike all the others. The rest of them, no matter what they might have been like in real life, and I imagine they were as nasty and degenerate as anybody, were just too goody goody. They bored my ass off with the white hat, fresh-faced, aw shucks, gallant, leave the girl behind and kiss the horse routine. I shined shoes out front of the low life Trocadero burlesque parlour; I knew life wasn't like that.

Lash Larue, he was my kind. He looked like a baddy all right and not

just because he dressed in black and toted that whip. Evil, like he'd con the widow out of her inheritance and rape Dale Evans. He had a street-wise, hard bitten fuck-you-jack look to him, like one of the Dead End Kids come of age. Straight from the lower east side and bad as hell.

Now, I was all grown up and he was a bum. I decided to pay him a visit.

I figured the jail might be mobbed with reporters and photographers and the curious but no, it was business as usual. It took me a while to hustle from one cop to the next and convince the fuzz in charge that there really was no harm in letting me see Lash, you know, for sentimental reasons and old time's sake.

They showed me to an air conditioned room with freshly painted walls, polished tile floors, modern desks and chairs and I waited, wondering whether I'd recognize him. Other people were there, lawyers, friends, relatives also waiting for prisoners to be brought out and I glanced up each time one came into the room. Christ, there was no mistaking him. Dressed in a Hawaiian shirt and baggy pants, he came through the door warily like an old con man and looked around trying to figure the angles. The cop with him pointed to me and Lash checked me out from under thick black eyebrows flecked with gray. I felt a little awkward now that he was there and I said I didn't have anything particular to tell, only that I used to like to watch him up there on the silver screen.

He shrugged and looked me over. Made an obvious point of staring me in the eye, his own narrowed. I felt like the new kid in the neighbourhood confronting the gang leader and awaiting rejection or approval. Finally, he smiled out of the side of his mouth, proffered a hand and we shook. The cop led us to a couple of chairs and sat ten feet away seeming to ignore us, reading a *Photoplay* magazine.

Lash didn't say much at first. He wanted to know who the hell I was so I told him and he listened and finally loosened up a bit. "So, you used to watch my pictures, huh?"

"Yeah, sure thing. I remember this one where..."

I recalled what I could of the movies and he would laugh and make a comment about the shooting of a certain scene and some of the people he worked with and soon he was talking more and more so that I would only have to say a couple of words, something like, who was the director? and he would be off and eventually he had worked himself into a monologue, a veritable torrent of words. At first, I thought maybe he hadn't had anyone to talk to for awhile and it was just gushing out but then I realized the man was a genuine big talker. He hardly stopped to breathe and he talked on many levels, sliding in and out of tenses, bringing in allusions from everywhere and at the end he would have come back full circle to whatever it was that started him off but meanwhile having included the script girl, the sex life of his agent, where he had been drinking the night before and what had been said, the merits of the Packard convertible he had been driving at the time, how he learned to use the whip, a quote or two from Isaiah or Ecclesiastes, the woes of being a movie star, how he had been robbed time and again by the insidious vultures of Hollywood, life and times in the carnivals, the one he was with now doing his whip act and driving a truck, his current girlfriend who was a stripper in the girlie show, and, in the middle of this river of words he would stop dead, momentarily damn the flood to stare off into space, squint his eyes, take a drag from an imaginary butt cupped in his hand and say, "No, kid. It would never work between you and me. You'd just get in the way, see." Then he would clap his hands, startling the drowsing cop, and shout, "Cut! Print it!" and be off once again,

He had seen it all, Lash had, and he wasn't bitter although he had every right to be.

unleashing the final part of this variegated speech, and just at the point when I had forgotten what the hell I had asked him in the first place he would sigh, "That particular director was a real scissorbill. I never liked him anyway."

I would make another comment, thus allowing him a couple of deep breaths before taking off again. He loved language and he loved to hurl it at you, only it was a tongue born and nurtured in the streets, under the bright lights, under carnival tents and in the back alleys of esoterica as well as those of real life. He had seen it all, Lash had, and he wasn't bitter although he had every right to be. To the contrary, all the bad deals of the past were used by him to strengthen his position, to nail down his stance, of which he was absolutely sure; it was on the other side of the line from the marks and the squares. He hadn't asked any cop to put him out of his misery either. He *told* that cop a few things.

While obliquely imparting to me his philosophy of life and directly filling me in on some sordid Hollywood gossip, Lash sketched the bare outline of his own career. Before getting his start in movies he was, of all things, a hairdresser! Later, he worked as a stunt man and eventually got bit parts as a heavy. He earned some credits as a "character" actor and was doing quite well—so well, in fact, that he was the first person approached for the lead in Howard Hawks' *Red River*. The role went to Montgomery Clift, of course, and the reason it did, according to Lash, was the difference in their sexual proclivities although he didn't say it exactly that way. The way he did say it was complete with anecdotes explaining the differences.

Montgomery Clift became a big respected actor and Lash Larue did five low-budget oaters and in a few years was touring state fairs with a whip act. Then, it was carnivals. Now, it was the Miami jail.

Anyway, there was that book review of Montgomery Clift's biography and the still from *Red River*. It might have been different. Monty died in his New York townhouse with only his houseboy Lorenzo for company. Lash is still out there somewhere.

We had been sitting there talking for nearly five hours, or at least *he* had been talking, when a cop came and told Lash he was free to go, someone had paid his fine. Out front, a buxom, bleached blonde who had turned thirty a long decade past was waiting for him. It was his girl, the stripper from the show. She handed him a pair of sunglasses which he put on and then kissed her. Lash turned to me and said, "See, Jimmy, you can always count on a carnie."

He walked out of the jail into the bright Florida sunshine. "Good lord" he said, "I could sure go for a couple of tall cool ones."

Although Lash invited me to join them, I begged off. He was already turning over various schemes out loud and also I figured they had things on their minds that didn't concern me. I would have just woken up the next morning hungover and in the employ of the carnival. I had my own schemes. We shook hands and Lash said he really appreciated me coming to see him. We said goodbye and when I had gone a half block I turned to look. Lash's Hawaiian shirt was ballooning out in back from the ocean breeze and the two of them were just making a squad's left under a cocktail glass and swizzle stick and heading for a little drink or two.

LOOKING FOR DIANE KEATON

BY JAMES MONACO

The trouble began for Diane Keaton in late August. The media people were back from the beaches scrounging for the lead fall story, and all signs pointed to Keaton. *Annie Hall,* one of the surprise hits of the spring, was still making money; the film (and its star) had set a new hip style for late seventies bas couture; and Keaton, starring in the upcoming *Looking For Mr. Goodbar,* was about to emerge from the shadow of her mentor, friend and sometime lover Woody Allen.

She looked like she was about to happen. *Goodbar* was one of three or four major films for the fall with women as central characters, and that provided an interesting sidebar. And the unusual publicity surrounding *Annie Hall* months earlier (it was, after all, an emotional biography of the Diane Woody knew) had softened the ground. Plus, the rumor was that *Goodbar* was a tough film, with considerable nudity and some heavy sex. That didn't jibe with the cute and kooky Keaton that we all know from Woody Allen's films.

In scores of magazine offices in midtown New York, editors were sitting around just before labor day being creative, as is their wont, in pretty much the same way. "Hey, guys, how about a cover on Diane Keaton?" Last spring, everybody had overdosed on Farrah Fawcett. For a period of three months, from April through June, any newstand in the country looked like a Warholian multiple of the fallen plastic angel. But FFM had sold magazines. Even *New Times* had gotten into the act, with by far the most attractive photo of Farrah, and headline: "In This Issue! Absolutely Nothing About Farrah Fawcett-Majors!"

This is the way the magazine business is run. There are rules. Women on the cover sell issues. Sexy women on the cover sell more issues. Sexy, partially-dressed women on the cover sell the most issues. It doesn't matter if you are *Farm Journal* or *Scientific American* ... or a small, but honest and lively film magazine published out of Montreal. It doesn't matter if you are selling to women (ask that *Cosmopolitan* girl) or men (viz. the skin books). That's the primary fact of magazine life.

Problem was, however, that Diane Keaton was neither ready for this deafening roar of media attention, nor, apparently, eager for it. A few months earlier, she had been a non-star of such caliber that when she arrived in LA three weeks early to begin work on *Goodbar,* Paramount refused to send a car to the airport to pick her up. She could still walk the streets of New York with relative immunity from stares and ogles. She did dress a bit kooky, but now everyone had the baggy pants and vest and floppy hat.

Moreover, Keaton's manager for the last seven years, Arlene Rothberg, had a righteous horror of the Farrah syndrome. "The only people who need publicity," she insists, "are people without talent. The more you know about somebody, the less you're interested in them." As a result, in nine years in the business, Keaton had never even done a photo session. There was no standard bio for the actress, except for a list of credits. Most important, Keaton, under Rothberg's tutelage, had done only one interview for *Annie Hall* (*Rolling Stone*) and would do only one for *Mr. Goodbar.*

Time won. Their cover on Keaton appeared the last week of September, and *Newsweek* (along with dozens of other magazines) had to settle for a lesser aspect of the new women in film phenomenon. (Two weeks later they weighed in apologetically with Jane Fonda). So if you want to find out what Diane Keaton's apartment looks like ("a half-furnished encampment that looks as if someone got a great bargain in white paint") or what her father Jack is like ("he's a handsome, prosperous engineer with his own consulting firm") or whether or not she really does say "La-De-Dah" all the time, send a dollar to *Time,* Time-Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, 10020, and ask for a copy of the September 26, 1977 issue. Turn to page 68.

Rothberg's (and Keaton's) attitude towards the whole publicity scam that provides us with a steady overrich diet of instant and instantly forgettable celebrities is no doubt admirable. If you're a working actor with even the slightest interest in your craft, publicity can be deadly. In the late sixties a new wave of young American male actors began to get some attention. They have grown in their craft more or less in inverse proportion to the amount of publicity they have received. Redford has never done better work than he did in *Downhill Racer* (1969). Pacino has kept on working in the theater, but is now reduced on film to looking romantic while pulling out clumps of Marthe Keller's hair in *Bobby Deerfield*, the latter-day *Love Story*. Even De Niro, with his well-known aversion to interviews, has descended to the level of mugging his way through $13 million musicals. The same threat awaits the late seventies group of actresses.

Will Keaton be able to avoid the trap? Magazine editors weren't the only media mavens to turn on to her this fall. The conjunction of *Annie Hall* and *Mr. Goodbar* couldn't have been a more effective career move if it had been predesigned. What the two films did, in effect, was to announce: "here's an attractive, appealing woman who's a good-natured role model (*Annie*), *and* she can act in tough, dramatic roles (*Goodbar*)."

By the end of September, more than twenty scripts a week were piling up on Rothberg's desk for Keaton. When the new star walked into the opening night party of the New York Film Festival on Allen's arm in *Annie* garb, five hundred dinner-jacketed and evening-dressed people turned to stare. The room stopped. The seas parted. Keaton did a long slow take: "Oh, Wow." Then rolled her eyes, retreated quickly into a corner with the equally "shy" Allen, and left two minutes later.

She had made her point. "Here I am, world." There's a certain duplicity operating here, not necessarily conscious, but nevertheless real. Rothberg told me, "Diane does not like to talk about herself. The *Time* interview was the most painful experience she's had so far." But the pain is to a certain extent self-inflicted. If you really don't like publicity, you don't decide to become an actress; it goes with the territory. If you are already an actress and you want to convey the impression of seriousness about your craft rather than celebrity, you don't shoot for the covers of major news-*making* magazines. And if you do feel you must permit this limited (and, it must be said, all the more effective) sort of exploitation, you don't show up at major industry parties dressed in costume from your last film. Especially when you know the place is half-filled with gossip columnists and

James Monaco, *Take One*'s Associate Editor, is the author of *The New Wave* and *How to Read a Film* (just released in paperback by Oxford University Press).

journalists. And if by some accident of naïveté you find yourself in this parlous situation, you don't do shtik followed by grand exit; you hang around and talk to people and pretty soon they treat you like a person, not a star.

If a slightly condemnatory tone has snuck in here, let me correct that impression. I think it is entirely likely that: a) Diane Keaton is just as shy and insecure as she is painted to be in the *Time* interview, and b) she really is thoroughly ambivalent about stardom, and rightly so, and c) she really does want to be regarded as a serious actress rather than a mysterious celebrity. Maybe she also likes to work regularly and maybe she also would like as many people as possible to see her work. If so, she's stuck in the dilemma of furious mass publicity that has destroyed or psychologically maimed scores of stars from Valentino and Clara Bow, through Hayworth and Monroe, on up to Rock celebrities. Supernovas collapse into black holes.

Keaton is about to start her fifth Woody Allen movie. She has made only six without him and had a leading role in only three of those. If she wants to escape the identification with Allen and develop her own persona she must hope that she will be seriously considered for the precious few really interesting roles for women that come up every year. She won't be if she's not bankable, and she won't be bankable unless she's a star, and she won't be a star unless she submits to the publicity game. The circle is vicious. Even Rothberg admits, "when you're a female actress, you have to beg for parts. The only thing stardom gets you is maybe a chance to choose those parts and the directors and other people you work with." That's no small advantage.

As it happens, Keaton is now, at this moment, actually bankable. Her name in a package will insure that a film is made. ("Every studio in town is desperately looking for a property for her, as am I," says manager Rothberg.) This is more than phenomenal, it's epochal.

Ever since Doris Day faded away fifteen years ago, the only truly bankable female stars have been Streisand and Minnelli (and, for a while in Black films, Diana Ross)—anomalies: singers who strongly evoked a nostalgia for thirties- and forties-style musicals. If Keaton can maintain this extraordinary position, she will do much, no matter what kinds of films she makes in the future, to redress the balance between men and women in the Hollywood fantasy version of our world.

She is by no means in the vanguard. Perhaps more important than *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* in the long run will be its two companions in this fall's current mini-phenomenon of—as *Newsweek* so daintily put it—"womanflicks" (on the model of "chickflicks"?). *Julia* and *The Turning Point*, two women's buddy films, star Jane Fonda and Vanessa Redgrave, and Anne Bancroft and Shirley MacLaine, respectively. All four of these actresses have reached (or passed) the age of forty. For the longest time, that birthday marked the end of a star actress's career—at least temporarily, until the offers for low-budget horror flicks started turning up.

If Fonda (40), Redgrave (40), Bancroft (46), and MacLaine (43) can bring it off, we may be looking forward not only to an era in which women can be people in the movies, but one in which older women have a chance, for the first time, to establish themselves in the movie mythos.

At the moment, although there are a significant number of interesting American actresses working, very few, it seems, have real star potential. Certainly, kook characters (most of them associated with Robert Altman) such as Spacek, Chaplin, Tomlin, Duvall, and Kellerman don't have it, no matter how interesting the roles they play. ("Kookie" girls have always been safe; what we're looking towards, rather, is women who *control* films, actresses with power, in pivotal roles.)

More likely, I think, the real stars (who are going to join lonely Mary Tyler Moore as role models in the late seventies and eighties) are going to develop out of the following group of a half a dozen or so: Keaton has been playing one of the more admirable kooks; *Mr. Goodbar* should help enlarge her range. Jill Clayburgh should also emerge from "girl" roles with the release of Paul Mazursky's *An Unmarried Woman* next spring. Vonetta McGee did an extraordinary job in *Brothers* this past summer. (It remains to be seen whether or not a Black actress can get the roles necessary to "cross over.") Talia Shire has established a good base and, I think, has the potential if she can get the roles. So has Jennifer Warren. Her work in *Night Moves* and *Slapshot* has been very much underrated. Her lawyer "Eloise Geech," in the *Kojak* episode "A Question of Answers," remains in the mind—the only woman ever to get a straight answer and honest respect from the prince of the Machos. A long shot is Meryl Streep, a young stage actress who's had only small parts in films, but has such unusual grace and versatility that she may break through into star roles rather quickly. Other possibilities: Candice Bergen, if she settles down; Jacqueline Bisset, although she may have to wait until she's old enough so that the intelligence outshines the physique;

If you really don't like publicity you don't decide to become an actress. It goes with the territory.

She won't be bankable unless she's a star and she won't be a star unless she submits to the publicity game.

Susan Sarandon (maybe), Marilyn Hassett (maybe), and Marie-France Pisier and Marthe Keller, if they can ever translate their European film personalities into an American idiom.

The competition is stiff for Diane Keaton. Success doesn't really depend on the cover of *Time* magazine; it depends on roles. And although the actresses may be ready (they have always been) there's no assurance that this fall's wavelet of films about women means that the twenty-five-year dam has broken. As I write, Keaton hasn't yet found a film to do after the new Woody Allen movie. She is in the best possible position to find out what's available and make a good deal, but the material doesn't seem satisfactory.

In mid-August she was considering the lead in the film version of Johanna Davis's novel *Life Signs*. It is a strong role, and a rather political one. People close to the production say the deal fell through when Keaton's representatives asked for $750,000 (she received $50,000 for *Goodbar*) and manager Arlene Rothberg insisted on co-producing the film. Rothberg angrily denies this. She adds that there are business rumors about Keaton that are lots worse. In the curious Hollywood system, they are one of the prime signs of success. At present, Rothberg has to say "no" for Keaton at least 20 times a week. "Give anybody a 'no'," she explains, "and you get rumors." It seems logical: you never hear a producer or packager say simply, "I couldn't sign her, she thought the script was a piece of shit."

As ambivalent as she seems to be about impending stardom and the accompanying publicity, it may be some consolation to Keaton to discover that *Goodbar*'s effect probably peaked before the film opened. Things are easing up.

And, in any event, in a couple of months, Jill Clayburgh will be taking the heat.

LOOKING AT **MR. GOODBAR**

Curiously or maybe not so curiously, the powerful pre-release publicity scam for *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* (and Diane Keaton) was perpetuated without any of the people who wrote glowingly about the film having seen it. As with *New York, New York* last spring (also preceded by six months of scintillating insider praise), the actual movie is disappointing.

No one can gainsay Keaton's work. It's a tour de force. She manages to make suicidal Terry Dunn rather appealing and—this is more difficult—understandable. If anything, the film's Terry is stronger and perhaps a shade more complicated than the Terry of the novel by Judith Rossner. No matter what else can be said about it, the movie has a certain value simply for presenting a woman in the controlling role of initiator of sexual relationships, and letting her enjoy (what she thinks is) uncomplicated sex in a way only men have been allowed to do heretofore in the Hollywood mythos.

But writer/director Richard Brooks has set this emblem in a simplistic and often anachronistic *mise en scène*. It's as if a woman of the seventies had wandered into a fantasy of forties Hollywood. Brooks eschewed location shooting, and the *film noir* sets give the film an unreality that's bothersome, when it's not laughable. He's shot the sex scenes with dramatic low-key lighting that makes them more salacious than they really are. And he's given Terry a family straight out of (Archie-) Bunkerland. Can you trust a film ostensibly set in 1975 and 1976 in which women still fly to Puerto Rico for abortions on the sly? *Goodbar* is a sixty-five-year-old's strange image of the world of twenty-five-year-olds, and the clash between the two points of view is more than the film can support.

People will laugh at *Goodbar* in places where they shouldn't, and nothing William Atherton, Tuesday Weld, or even Diane Keaton can do will save it.

KEATON **BIO**FILMOGRAPHY

Born Los Angeles, 1946.

1969 Replaced Lynn Kellogg in Broadway production of *Hair*. Got some ink when she refused to take her clothes off.

1970 Met Allen, co-starred in his *Play It Again, Sam,* on Broadway.
First film: *Lovers and Other Strangers.* (Cy Howard)

1972 *Play It Again Sam.* (Herbert Ross)
The Godfather (Francis Coppola)

1973 *Sleeper* (Allen)

1974 *The Godfather, Part II* (Coppola)

1975 *Love and Death* (Allen)

1976 *Harry and Walter Go to New York* (Mark Rydell)
I Will, I Will, For Now (*Norman Panama*)

1977 *Annie Hall* (Allen)
Looking For Mr. Goodbar (Richard Brooks)

PAULINE KAEL

THE DESPERATE CRITIC

BY MITCH TUCHMAN

"...If you check back on my previous books, I've had exactly the same thing happen each time. On Deeper into Movies: *that one John Simon and Andrew Sarris worked me over. It's happened with every single book, so it's no great change. This time it was made to seem, I guess by* Newsweek, *that this was a new phenomenon, whereas it's absolutely standard. . . .*

"I think you've picked yourself a very stale subject. I wish sometimes people would write about my criticism instead of the supposed impact of my reviews on somebody or other. I write. I wish somebody would evaluate it sometime, instead of trying to make this big pitch, you know, that always revolves on whether I'm quoted or not. I think I'm quoted less than practically any critic in the business. I think it's very funny." —Pauline Kael, in a telephone conversation with Mitch Tuchman.

Gene Shalit, the film reviewer on NBC's *Today Show*, carries weight at the motion picture box office. Flourishing that brilliantly meaningless, universally serviceable recommendation, "See it with someone you love," and passing it off as criticism, he is the only one with commercial influence. Pauline Kael, who mysteriously and just as meaninglessly, asserts, "'Cinema' in a pure sense is not to be found," has no power over ticket sales. She is, nonetheless, known to people who go seriously to the movies. They talk about movies and talk about her. Even when they disagree with her conclusions, they admire her wit. The windy pieces she writes for *The New Yorker* are collected and reprinted in hardcover and paperback. "Reading her," a book reviewer for the Chicago *Sun-Times* commented on her volume, *I Lost It at the Movies,* "is better than going to the movies."

Pauline Kael's career began in the obscurity of a rural cinema in Petaluma, California, where her father was a chicken farmer. Years later after graduation from the nearby Berkeley campus of the University of California, she did volunteer film reviews for KPFA, a San Francisco radio station. She was leader of a group of satellite intellectuals who orbited Berkeley. Once a week they had dinner, got crocked, and discussed movies on the air. Those were good-natured programs. Eventually she did the shows alone and started writing. Based on her early pieces, theater owner Ed Landberg decided she was a great critic and invited her to program his Berkeley Cinema Guild, a twin art house — a good repertory theater, though not a wildly adventurous one. Kael wrote program notes, became manager and Mrs. Landberg. After a couple of seasons both relationships broke up in recrimination. Landberg moved out, and when KPFA refused Kael's salary, she lambasted management on the air. Male critics, she contended, were accusing her of penis envy.

Her prejudices in those first years were clearer than her predilections: Hollywood executives particularly galled her. The sloth of the general audience and the "liberal complacency" and "good taste" of the art house devotees depressed her. She blamed the audience for much that she found wrong with pictures. "One of the reasons why character is disappearing is that audiences don't want to respond or feel." Still, given the

Mitch Tuchman, recovering from the guilt associated with living in Hollywood and not wanting to make movies, has written about films and the industry for *Esquire, The Village Voice, Oui,* newspapers, and film magazines.

choice between the kitsch enjoyed by the masses and the arty films subscribed to by the snobs, she'd take the kitsch. "Crudity," she wrote, "has often been the only sign of life in American movies; the prestige picture sacrifices even this feeble vitality for an impressive façade."

Building a career, she was reckless and belligerent. As an exhibitor in Berkeley she was convinced of the power of critics. "[A] destructive bunch of solidly, stupidly respectable mummies," she called them in 1961. They "kept people from seeing" good films. The *New York Times'* Bosley Crowther could "be counted on to miss the point." Dwight Macdonald, Richard Roud, Stanley Kauffmann, whom she briefly replaced on *The New Republic* in 1966-67, Robert Hatch, John McCarten, Arthur Knight, Judith Crist, Penelope Houston, Brendan Gill, whom she replaced at *The New Yorker,* and Penelope Gilliatt, then of *The Observer,* were death-dealing critics she singled out for faulty perception. Let any woman beware, who had reached national prominence before her: Susan Sontag ("The end of criticism"), Mary McCarthy, Lillian Hellman, Margaret Mead, Katherine Anne Porter.

In the mid-'60s Kael left San Francisco and the journals for which as an amateur she had written (*Film Quarterly, Moviegoer, The Massachusetts Review, Kulchur,* and *Sight and Sound*) and went to New York at the invitation of *McCall's.* For a consumer product oriented magazine like *McCall's* to hire a virulently anti-business critic like Kael was utter foolishness. To her, executives were "jackals," "omniverous" and "grossly corrupt." In her first review she panned *The Sound of Music.* She called it "The Sound of Money." In her second she chided Twentieth Century-Fox for flying reviewers to the Jamaican locations of *Our Man Flint.* If the finished film got good reviews, she speculated, filmgoers would know the reason why. She was fired. Thereafter she freelanced for *The Atlantic, Holiday, Life, Vogue, Mademoiselle, Harper's* and *The New Yorker.*

As a writer Kael tends toward logorrhea, writing as if paid by the word and starving. "Her occasional garrulousness implies that the reader cannot follow a straightforward line of reasoning," wrote Gill in *Here at The New Yorker.* She mourns "Art," the quality she finds least apparent in films, and contrasts it to "Pop," a quality they've got aplenty. She idolizes directors like Jean Renoir, Robert Altman, and Jean-Luc Godard. though a fall from grace, like Godard's, is irreparable.

Within her range, however, Kael does splendidly. As a movie reviewer she is a great drama critic, reviewing scripts and performances, relatively impervious to the other elements. Some of her best reviews came in the second year at *The New Yorker,* 1969-70, during a brief wave of "theatrical" movies: *Star!, The Sea Gull, The Night They Raided Minsky's,* Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party.* "Pinter is the actor as a dramatist," she wrote, ". . . actors playing juicy roles and skilfully building up scenes. Holding the stage becomes the drama; in this movie version, however, the camera movements take over for what the actors on stage do by force and magnetism, and these camera movements seem odd and arbitrary because they determine what is in contest on the stage."

"Nothing is so deathly to enjoyment as the relentless march of a movie to fulfil its obvious purpose," she asserted. *The Sergeant, Midnight Cowboy,* Polanski's *Macbeth, Goodbye, Columbus,* and *The Paper Chase* were monotonic, weakened for lack of alternatives in attitude and tone.

She loves to "rewrite" movies, then declare herself satisfied with her imaginary remake. To a question at the American Film Institute, "Why don't you want to make films?" she replied, "I was talking to Bernardo [Bertolucci] the other day, and he said to me, 'What you do and what I do is the same thing.'"

A fan at heart, and one who believes that "drama . . . posits intense interest in the character and destiny of the individual," Kael is able to analyze the careers of actors—not actresses—and render an almost palpable sense of their abilities and appeal: Beatty, Benjamin, Brando (a special favorite), Grant, Hoffman

(thinks too much), Lancaster, Montand, Newman, Pryor, Redford (to whom she often returns), Segal ("probably the best light comedian in American movies"). Yet to her they are not really protagonists. "[T]hey represent the voice of adjustment, the caution against individuality, independence, emotionality, art, ambition, personal vision." In 1976 (in "Notes on Evolving Heroes, Morals, Audiences") she drew together Robert Shaw, Richard Dreyfuss, and Roy Scheider in *Jaws;* Jack Nicholson; John Wayne in *The Shootist;* Robert Redford; and the protagonists of *The Return of a Man Called Horse, The Man Who Fell to Earth,* and *Dog Day Afternoon,* and added, "In primitive societies, and in this country until quite recently, a man proved his courage by exposing himself to a dangerous test. If there's any equivalent to that now, it's exposing himself to the danger of going . . . crazy."

When she began at *The New Yorker* she launched an aesthetic. "The question people ask when they consider going to a movie is not 'How's it made?' but 'What's it about?'" Technique she finds "hardly worth talking about unless it's used for something worth doing." The formal aspect of film awaits her moral judgement. "Despite the dubious methods, the purpose of the brutality in *Z* was moral—it was to make you hate brutality. In *The French Connection* you love it, you wait for it . . . It is . . . what we once feared mass entertainment might become: jolts for jocks."

In her first review for McCall's she panned The Sound of Music. She called it "The Sound of Money."

Twenty years ago at the start of her career, Pauline Kael dubbed movies "the desperate art." From that moment on she has been ridden by ambivalent feelings about pictures. "Platonists," she said, "wanted to prove that cinema was a real art, like the other arts, when the whole world instinctively preferred it because it was a bastard, cross-fertilized super-art." She remained of that paradoxical state of mind whereby a film cannot be art and a popular success at the same time. *Hospital:* "terrible as it is . . . it's one of the few enjoyable"; *Cabaret:* "A facile idea . . . not carried out facilely"; *Claire's Knee:* "charming, serene . . . unusually civilized . . . I don't think it's a great film"; *Klute:* "far from a work of art, but it's a superior thriller melodrama"; *Accident:* "the best new movie around, it's too easy for art"; *La Femme Infidele:* "isn't a failure, but it isn't a work of art either." Had she cherished ambivalence more, she could not have achieved lucidity less.

The sheer gusto of her participation in the "on-going battle of commerce and art" apparently reveals her antipathy towards trash. In fact the opposite is true: Kael's severe criticism of popular films is an angry expression of her antipathy towards the ticket-buying masses and the pandering tycoons. When she wrote 20 years ago in "Movies, the Desperate Art," "American filmmakers have been crippled by business financing and the ideology it imposed: they were told they had an obligation to entertain the general public . . .", or when in 1974 she wrote in "On the Future of the Movies," "Everything is ready for an age of great movies except the entrepreneurs and the public," it was not because the films had disappointed her that she lashed out at the viewers and the executives, but because the audience had disappointed her that she lashed out at the movies. Yet she remains loyal to "the jerk audience," "the clod audience," which is the basis of her ambivalence about films. ("I didn't bother writing about Romain Gary's *Birds of Peru* because the theater was empty when I saw it.")

Pauline Kael is a child of her time. Born in 1919, she came of age in an age of sour grapes, the late '30s. The Fascists had tried to change social values without affecting private property. The Bolsheviks had tried to change property sure that values would follow suit. American radicals with a deeply etched bias towards individual expression were horrified when both evolved identically towards totalitarianism, blurring distinctions, squashing individualism, particularly dissent. The Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 (when she was a philosophy student at Berkeley and her friends what she called "more or less socialist") seemed an insufferable demonstration that "dehumanization," not private property, was the enemy, Communism and Fascism simply alternate forms of suppressing the soul.

American radicals, who, in the '30s, had tried to integrate the "masses" into High Culture with its emphasis on the individuality of the artist (and his characters), now in distaste abandoned the masses as irredeemably "unculturable." They retreated to theirs, the high side, of a yawning chasm to wait for the millenium with only telescopic vision to keep apprised of that vital, alluring, desperate mass trash on the other side. Could this be art when the interests of the artists were subordinated to the interests of the consumers for simple distraction and the interests of the consumers subordinated to the whims of the Mass Culture entrepreneurs?

There was an excuse for that sort of Mass Culture/ High Culture ideology in the '40s when a disappointed Trotskyist like Dwight Macdonald or the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset were writing it. That was the condescending liberalism of the day, and it contained at least a cranky, vestigial aspiration for improving an unregenerate society. Kael's tragedy was to have been intellectually born (*pace* Bernardo Bertolucci) *after* the revolution; her folly that she still stoops to conquer.

A disdainful melancholia pervades every perception from the most intimate ("something kills love . . . something always does") to the political ("Antonioni is an avowed Marxist—but from this film [*L'Avventura*] I think we can say that although he may believe in the socialist criticism of society, he has no faith in the socialist solution. When you think it over, probably more of us than would care to admit it feel the same way.") The desire to be a moral force in an immoral, dehumanized world: this way lies despair. Despair becomes cynicism, and cynicism becomes inertia.

Behind the confident prose is a metaphysician, and the arrogant metaphysics of Mass Culture criticism, of which Kael is the predominant proponent today, describe the audience more than the art. (Art for her is a residual category. She never defines it, she invokes it.) When it comes to the work itself, she is a priestess chanting in a dusky oratory: "'Cin-e-ma'-in-a-pure-sense-is-not-to-be-fou-ound." Sounds deep; means nothing.

"I think I know where just about all the elements come from in most American movies (and in most foreign movies, too) and how the mechanisms work," she wrote in her review of *Thieves Like Us,* "but I don't understand how Robert Altman gets his effects . . . Renoir . . . Godard . . . Bertolucci. When an artist works right on the edge of his unconscious, like Altman, not asking himself why he's doing what he's doing but trusting to instinct (which in Altman's case is the same as taste), a movie is a special kind of gamble." If you are to be convinced (or enlightened or even snowed) by "instinct" and "the unconscious," this is the criticism for you. Vision, feelings, artists' special needs: they cheapen individuality by making it theology.

To separate Art from Pop in a situation where they are inseparable is naïveté. To suggest that victory in the "on-going battle" would be a pristine film conservatory along 19th century lines where businessmen act as patrons is ridiculous. Film tickets, not films per se, are the business of Hollywood. That

does not make filmmaking white collar crime nor the filmmaker hangman at his own execution. That he creates (collaboratively) an object for rent (to theaters), and someone else (the distributor) is the lessor, does not diminish his status as an artist. All movies are art or none are. "Art" is not an accolade to be bestowed by each critic on his half dozen favorites.

An alarming change occurred midway through Kael's tenure at *The New Yorker.* Beginning November 13, 1971 with her review of *Fiddler on the Roof* ("the most *powerful* movie musical ever made") a progression began from scourge of the film industry to saviour. Celebrating big films, perhaps unwittingly Pauline Kael became the industry's greatest spokesperson. *"The Conformist, McCabe and Mrs. Miller, Sunday Bloody Sunday, The Last Picture Show, Fiddler on the Roof, Murmur of the Heart, The Garden of the Finzi-Continis, Cabaret, The Godfather,* and of course, the films one may have major reservations about . . . *The French Connection . . . A Clockwork Orange . . . Straw Dogs . . .* A reviewer could hardly ask for more from any art, high or popular, and that list shows how far movies have gone in blurring the distinction." A two-page *New York Times* reprint of her review of *The Last Tango in Paris* seven months later made a Kael quotation *de rigueur* in the ads. She slipped

All movies are art or none are. "Art" is not an accolade to be bestowed by each critic on his half dozen favorites.

quotable lines into reviews that were not even raves and lent quotes for films she had not reviewed at all, like *Going Places* and *The Conversation,* little by little chipping away at that maverick integrity.

Evers sprinkled the pages:
Last Tango—"most powerfully erotic movie ever made"
Sophia Loren—"most luscious comedienne the screen has ever known"
Jeff Bridges—"may be the most natural and least self-conscious screen actor who ever lived"
Godfather—"best gangster film ever made in this country"
Battle of Algiers—"most impassioned, most astute call to revolution ever"
Nashville—"funniest epic vision of America ever to reach the screen"
Godfather II—"may be the most passionately felt epic ever"
Shampoo—"most virtuoso example of sophisticated, kaleidoscopic farce that American moviemakers have ever come up with"
Taxi Driver—"no other film has ever dramatized urban indifferences so powerfully"
Frederick Wiseman—"most sophisticated and intelligent person ever to enter the field of documentary filmmaking"

The year Pauline Kael lost it at the movies was 1974. It happened with the article called "On the Future of the Movies," a remake of her earlier article, "Movies, the Desperate Art." It was a recapitulation of 20 years of rankling irritation, 20 years of battling producers as if they were personal antagonists, 20 years in which nothing had changed, except her pique, which had turned to apoplexy. Every tin soldier in that 20 Years' War lined the battlements under her command. Art and the Expressive Needs of Artists to the left of her, Commercial Product, Big Advertising Budgets, and Middlemen to the right. Successful filmmakers with "discipline, success plus a belief in success," consorted with the enemy, the producers, the monolithic ranks of Frankenstein's monsters and Kings Kong. "A Sam Peckinpah film, an Altman film, a Kershner film—the executives get pleasure out of seeing those films fail. It's a punishment of the artist." The businessmen "can outfox the artists damn near every time; that's really the business they're in."

"As soon as an artist . . . begins to believe that what matters is to satisfy the jerk audience out there—he stops being an artist. He becomes a businessman, marketing a commodity." *The Godfather,* which she loved so well? This was not a commodity? Its director, Francis Ford Coppola, with multiple picture deals, with multi-million dollar contracts, and actors signed to seven-year pacts? This is not perhaps a businessman as well as an artist? Could there be a dialectic of art and industry out there?

"And there are the high fliers," she continued, "who have been locked out all along—the dozens of artist-filmmakers who work in film not as a collaborative storytelling medium but as a highly individual art form, more closely related to the graphic arts than to Hollywood." Locked out? Locked out of her reviews she must have meant. Coming from a woman with a belief in her power, "with some pride in being able to get people to come see a picture I thought ought to be seen," shall we ask if once, just once, in seven years at *The New Yorker* she gave the high fliers a break and devoted a column to one of them, to Ed Emschwiller or Jordan Belson, whom she mentioned for the first time here, to Kenneth Anger, to the young exploitation filmmakers, egghead apprentices who will take over the industry next year or the year after, to Stan Brakhage, to the shows at the Whitney Museum in New York or other forums for experimental films? Not a column? A page. Not a page? How about six inches? Make it three inches. Three inches for the high fliers in seven years. No, Pauline Kael is only interested in the big, commercial pictures. She pretends she is interested in the tenderfoot filmmakers and Art. So much for maverick integrity, and when she lost that, she lost her principal claim to our attention. It is not hypocrisy, but all that is separated from it by a fine line. More so now than ever, she is hasty, ill-considered, and self-righteous.

It has been a downgrade spiral ever since 1974, well documented by her latest compendium of reviews, *Reeling,* covering 1972-75, a long series of bizarre judgments that resemble tests for the faithful, quotes for the ads, sparing reviews of the lesser works of directors she has chosen to favor, still ignoring the high fliers. The heroes and villains of the movie screen ride roughshod on her reviews. Good guys are not responsible for the evil they may do, and evil guys take all the blame for sin in Sin City. "I know [Liza Minnelli] consented to do this role, but I was offended for her. She has not earned *Lucky Lady,* and she does not deserve to be made so crude." (Minnelli's version does not go that way at all.) "As the losing battles with the moneymen have gone on, year after year, Peckinpah has—only partly sardonically, I think—begun to see the world in terms of the bad guys (the studio executives who have betrayed him or chickened out on him) and the people he likes (generally actors), who are the ones smart enough to see what the process is all about," she wrote in her review of *The Killer Elite.* "Hatred of the bad guys—the total mercenaries—has become practically the only sustaining emotion in his work . . . "

She caused a brief stir reviewing *Nashville* in rough cut. Considering that it would otherwise fall within the six-month stint of Penelope Gilliatt, with whom she regularly alternates at *The New Yorker,* it seemed justified. She is "notoriously impatient" with the arrangement with Gilliatt, according to Brendan Gill, "because she is insatiable and wishes nothing less than to see every movie made and to give her opinion of it in print." Finally her criticism is as she described that monument to bitchery, *All About Eve.* "This is ersatz art of a very high grade . . . The dialogue and atmosphere are so peculiarly remote from life that they have sometimes been mistaken for art. The synthetic has qualities of its own—glib, over-explicit, self-important."

THE REGULARS

COFFEE, BRANDY & CIGARS

HERMAN WEINBERG

None of the media but the movies keep saying "the most this or that of all time" whenever it pats some work on the back—as if movies dated from the beginning of Western civilization. What else is "the most of all time"? They daren't say the truth, "since 1895" (before which there wasn't any such thing as movies) because that doesn't sound like much. But then, no medium but the movies uses words so loosely to impress its constituents.

The full idiocy of these constituents becomes apparent when one thinks of those who panicked over Orson Welles' radio broadcast of the invasion from Mars—it never even occurred to them to check the news by simply turning the dial to another station.

In art, the poetic truth is better than the real truth. Ingres' nude, "La Grande Odalisque," has three vertebrae too many, the result of a "spiritual myopia" on the part of the artist (to get the fullest effect of the sinuous curve of her back).

During the making of *Lifeboat* at Fox in 1944, composer David Raksin was told that Hitchcock had decided against using any music to score the film. When asked why that unusual decision had been reached, he was told, "Hitchcock feels that since the entire action of the film takes place on the open ocean, where would the music be coming from?" To which Raksin replied "Ask Mr. Hitchcock to explain where the cameras came from and I'll tell him where the music comes from."

A perfectly delightful bedside companion for film buffs is Maurice Bessy's *Les Passagers du Souvenir* (Albin Michel, Paris), a book of anecdotes of all the film luminaries he has known over the years, from Mack Sennett and Griffith to Grace Kelly, Brigitte Bardot, Orson Welles, Marcel Pagnol and Chaplin—always Chaplin, from the beginning to the end—and every one you can think of in between, who made up "les rois de ma nuit"—and what a night it was! Enticingly illustrated, too, with stills you never saw before.

Strictly for the "buffs": Erick Rhode's *History of the Cinema* commits a couple of gaffes re *A Woman of Paris* and *Storm Over Asia*. In the former he refers to "the transvestite at a party wrapping himself tightly in a woman's gown" which is entirely in Mr. Rhode's imagination as it is not in the film. In the latter he repeats (as most "film historians" do) that the Mongol fur trapper shot by the British is discovered afterwards to be a descendant of the great and terrible Genghis Khan. But the amulet worn by the young fur trapper, which is found on him, was *not his* but the crooked priest's amulet (the *shaman* who came to attend the trapper's sick father in the yurt). In the fight with the trapper, the priest drops it while fleeing and the trapper's mother finds it and gives it as a goodluck charm to protect her son. Pudovkin's ironic shaft that the descendant of Genghis Khan was just a crooked priest is thus lost in Rhode's telling of it. Rhode also says that in *A Woman of Paris* "a young man commits suicide at a party / orgy" which was "revealing of Hollywood at the time of the pre-Hays scandals." Not so. The young man, Marie St. Clair's old sweetheart, commits suicide in a restaurant where he finds her with her new lover. It had nothing to do with the "pre-Hays scandals."

Twice this column has mentioned the possibility of a film telling the love story of Abelard and Heloise, if this were the best of all possible worlds, and now comes word that Franz Seitz, financial backer of Pabst, Rossellini and, most recently, of the film of Thomas Mann's *Disorder and Early Sorrow,* will do it, updating it to the present, proof that a real love story is immortal. The original, as you know, dates from the medieval age.

Did you know that Antonin Artaud was overwhelmed by the Marx Brothers in *Horsefeathers*? (If you don't know Artaud as the nihilist French poet and playwright, how about from his roles as Marat in Gance's *Napoléon* and the sympathetic priest who hears Joan's confession and brings her the crucifix which she embraces in Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc?*)

If you don't think there's anything left to say about Eisenstein, read Norman Swallow's *Eisenstein: A Documentary Portrait* based on personal recollections of those who knew him—Jorvis Ivens, Grierson, Ivor Montagu, Basil Wright, King Vidor, etc. Fetchingly illustrated, too, with stills and drawings, many of which are new. As a $3.50 paperback (Dutton), it's a buy.

So is the expanded new edition (the third) of *The Lubitsch Touch* (Dover) with added text and illustrations (119 now) and an "Afterward" evaluating Lubitsch in terms of today.

For those who thought Sternberg's military piano code played by X-27, the spy in *Dishonored,* was "a bit much": during World War II, the Russians broadcast—over their radio performances by The Red Orchestra—a military code in the guise of symphonic music, arranged and directed by the Soviet Secret Police, the KGB. Even Hitchcock couldn't resist it and utilized this device in *The Lady Vanishes*. But Sternberg did it first, in 1931.

We are asked to boycott tuna fish because dolphins are destroyed in the process of netting them. Did you know that dolphins were sacred to the ancient Greeks and were regarded as symbols of happiness? In his original script for *Potemkin* (not retained in the film itself) Eisenstein, immediately following the refusal of the firing squad to fire at the sailors under the tarpaulin, inserted the next shot: *Dolphins leaping.*

I was surprised to see so sweet a film as Harry and Tonto allowed to be made in these crapulous times.

Stroheim's *The Merry Widow* is not what it looks like (tho' for some it is)—a confection, a box of liquor-filled chocolate bon-bons. It is like his other films; it shows a pessimistic view of the world, despite the happy end (not his)—no more to be taken seriously than the happy end of *The Last Laugh.*

The peroration at the end of Part One of *The Big Parade* of the trucks moving up to the front under an umbrella of planes sweeping overhead is built up by Vidor with such irresistible cumulative power that it is enough to sweep audiences from their feet and part any reviewer from a large degree of his judgment.

Who says this column seldom comments on current film? Is *Harry and Tonto* still regarded as a recent film? Thing happen so fast these days I never know. Anyway, whether it is or not, I like it. I was even surprised to see so sweet a film allowed to be made in these crapulous times. Paul Mazursky was the director.

Because a woman wrote the screenplay—obscenities and all—of the violent *Slap Shot,* about a run-down hockey team, the very perversity of that will doubtless attract hordes to the box office, wherever the English language (or what now passes for it) is understood. Certainly nothing is more current than this kind of film

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which Ben Hecht had in mind when he concluded his withering "Prayer to his Bosses" with:

Oh let me grow one leaf of grass
One breath of truth, one cry of man's
Travail and quest, one peal of brass
To drive Art from its crapping cans—
One tale that doesn't kiss the ass
Of ninety million movie fans.

To which I will conclude with Kafka's "Swearing destroys man's greatest invention—language. It is an insult to the soul and a murderous offense against race. An offense against language is always an offense against feeling and against the mind, a darkening of the world. Words involve a decision between life and death." ●

WOMEN IN FILM

KAY ARMATAGE

Dialectical Blisters

I've seen a great many films by women this past year, almost as many as in 1972-73, when we had the first batch of women's film festivals. In 1976 the Cannes and Edinburgh festivals and Toronto's Festival of Festivals had a good contingent of women's films and women filmmakers, and there was of course the second New York Women's Film Festival with two weeks of presentations of major works. As a result, I had originally intended to write a round-up of new women's films—another installment of the We Do Exist saga. But for the present I can only write what's most on my mind, and that's the state of feminist film criticism.

As usual there was lots of talk, and that's what I'm on about for this piece. I was often uneasy, sometimes agitated and occasionally horrified at the critical tendencies among these groups in both New York and Toronto. My distress is best exemplified by two of the sessions in New York.

One session was called Viva Las Mujeres, featuring Karen and David Crommie's 1966 documentary, *The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo;* Chick Strand's 1976 short, *Mujer de Milfuegos* (Woman of a Thousand Fires); and Helena Solberg Ladd's 1975 documentary about Latin American working class women, *The Double Day. The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo* is a lovely film about a Mexican painter whose work deserves resurrection: it consists of photographs of the artist and her magical paintings, which are mostly of herself or of her fantasies of her miscarried child. Voice-over comments come from people who knew her intimately. A remarkably discreet film, the only motion footage is of her house and the dripping fountain in her garden. The film was greeted with stunned appreciation for the woman and her work.

The next film wasn't so well-liked. Chick Strand's usual wonderfully expressionistic ethnography seemed to be just too abstract, too poetic, even though the programme notes carefully directed us to see that it indeed was a film about women's daily lives and the repetitive tasks of household and farm responsibilities. Oh yes, that's what the sweeping scene was about, right on. But there were horrified murmurs at the swinging the chicken around by the neck scene—not very nice.

The audience point of view was clarified with the final film in the programme, *The Double Day.* At fifty minutes (about twenty too long to my mind), the film exhaustively charts the new map of South America, city and country, mining town and farm, sweeping barren plain, factory and market: making shaky figure eights on the holy ice of—yes sisters—the Raised Consciousness. Of course a consciousness raising session (secretaries and students) is included, as well as the mandatory middle-class coiffed villain sitting just all right in a swanky café. Cut to the colourful native women in the market place, and then to the tough mining wife. All the feminist points are made, over and over, and from the very lips of the Latin American women themselves. And each point was greeted with raised fist ecstasy from the audience. Feminism rules the waves. Now I don't want to say that such films shouldn't be made or that they're not useful; on the contrary. But I was dismayed by the knee-jerk reactions of this New York audience. Their response reminded me of the scene in the Hummer Sisters' Toronto production of the Patty Hearst Story, when Patty emerges from the SLA training camp to sing, "Sisters, sisters, I've got dialectical blisters."

My dialectical blisters became running sores the next day at the press conference following Liliane Dreyfus' *Femmes au soleil*. Producer, writer, and director (after a career as actor in films by Godard and others), Dreyfus made this first film on a budget of $40,000. Beautifully shot by Nestor Almendros, it's about tragedy in the life of the Beautiful People one momentous day at a luxurious country house in France. Tragedy in this context means going on the same, the misery of wealthy husbands, beautiful children, gorgeous clothes, breakfasts in bed, maids serving lunch by the pool and the young-love adventurer being killed as he's on his way to take the heroine away from it all. Called *Rohmeresque,* apparently because the film has lots of talk and a credit to Eric Rohmer as Technical Advisor (a T.A. is required on a first film by the French authorities), the film was roundly denounced as bourgeois and reactionary—criteria I've never heard applied to Rohmer's own films. There was a distinctly unsisterly split in the audience that day, as the middle-class coiffed villains who loved the film were shouted down by such feminist criticisms as "Why did you show the women exploiting their maids?" Dreyfus, skinny and shaken in her jeans, red sweater, and dirty hair, insisted that she was telling the truth about these women's lives, that she didn't need to make the feminist points because they were there to be seen and felt and not to be underlined, that the tragedy here was isolation and boredom and the unquestioning passing of that heritage from mother to daughter because they didn't know any better. Well sure the film is bourgeois and reactionary, but there are still solid things for women to learn from this film, like tight scripting which still allows for meditation and gentleness, or about making a first feature for $40,000, or about the fact that Dreyfus is distributing it herself.

The middle-class coiffed villains who loved the film were shouted down by such feminist criticisms as "Why did you show the women exploiting their maids?"

Interesting too that the class struggle didn't occur around Liliane de Kermedec's *Aloise*, a film with equally sumptuous production values, also about the frustrations of a bourgeois woman. But in *Aloise* the woman's frustrations are different: they're artistic. Prevented by her middle-class upbringing from going on the stage, Aloise becomes a frustrated governess, goes insane at the outbreak of World War I to remain in an asylum for forty years of despair and anger, finally emerging as a recognized painter of rather cute Picasso-esque pictures. Featuring brilliant acting by woman-of-a-thousand-faces Delphine Seyrig (*Last Year At Marienbad, Muriel, Accident, Stolen Kisses, The Milky Way, The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie, Black Windmill, India Song,* and *Jeanne Dielman*), the film hits a feminist home-run, touching all the bases of frustration, insanity, confinement, and finally—home plate without sliding—artistic achievement. It's a good film, rivetingly dramatic, rebelliously foul-mouthed (in the 'insane' parts), classically fragmented in structure and admirably plain with emphasis on character—no wonder the audience liked it. But does all that explain the violent polarities of their responses to these two films?

Kay Armatage's article on feminist film criticism will continue in the column section of the next two issues of *Take One.* ●

Kay Armatage is a Toronto writer, teacher and filmmaker. She recently co-directed *Jill Johnston, October '75.*

TECHNICAL NOTES

BOB PARENT

Fiddling with Sound

Whether utilized for creative or corrective purposes, the ability to manipulate sound is a valuable tool for the filmmaker. But, with the exception of elementary filters and tone controls, this capability heretofore has been limited to the professional sound studio. Recent products introduced to the consumer hi-fi market now bring this range of control within the realm—and pocketbook—of the independent filmmaker. Primarily intended for the listening enhancement of the audiophile, these components serve the filmmaker in a dual capacity—that of controlling, improving or sometimes saving sound materials to be used in a track, and/ or correcting and tuning the acoustics of the screening room.

Essentially there are two types of desired control—the modification of existing source material and the removal of unwanted sounds. Some noise sources can be overcome by the use of a suppression system, such as Dolby or dbx, *at the time of recording,* but post-recording correction has previously been available only from the sophisticated sound studio. Professional film recording equipment (such as Nagra, Stellavox, Tandberg, Uher, etc.) is designed to produce *unaltered* high fidelity sound.

The most readily available and also most versatile component is the equalizer, which differs from the 'boost and droop' tone controls on most amplifiers by being able to raise or lower the response of selective bandwidths individually. This component, used between signal source and amplifier, is available in a variety of models, mono or stereo, ranging from a minimum of three to as many as thirty bands within the ten octave range of human hearing. Obviously, the larger the number of bands, the greater the range of manipulation.

As designed for the audiophile, an equalizer is intended to be used to correct the colorations in the speaker system and the acoustics of the owner's listening room. Only a very few theaters, incidentally, have a sound system that is properly balanced to compensate for the acoustics of the space *and* the limitations of sound track technology. Although it is impossible to reproduce *exactly* the acoustics of one space in another, it is now possible to approach this ideal (particularly with headphones) and, at the same time, remove most of the noise deriving from dirt and scratches that start accumulating on a track after the first few passes through a projector.

While the equalizer is used to correct the frequency response as heard at the listener's seat, an expander—when properly adjusted—can usually restore much of the dynamics of the original sound. At the same time, expander action also helps to suppress certain types of noise—particularly hiss. A 'dynamic noise filter' can *eliminate* upper frequency noise during the gaps in the occurrence of these frequencies in the program signal. And the 'impulse noise filter' is very effective in removing sharp peaked noises such as clicks and pops.

These same components are perhaps even more useful in the preparation of sound tracks. The many sources (sync., 'wild' tapes, EFX, music, stock files, phonograph—78 & LP's—full track, half track and quarter track tape, etc.) frequently present problems of compatibility in the process of combining them into the final soundtrack. Aside from the economy of being able to make corrections before going to the sound studio, the equalizer also enables a considerable amount of aesthetic manipulation of sound material.

There are two basic types of equalizers—graphic and parametric. In a graphic equalizer, each band has a pre-determined fixed response curve and is centered on an assigned fixed frequency. Therefore, in order to obtain narrow band control—or filtration—a unit must have many bands. More desirable, however, is the ability to set the centerband frequency as needed and then vary the shape of the response curve to suit the situation. This is the newest type available to the non-professional and is called a paragraphic equalizer.

Equalizers range in price from less than a hundred dollars to over a thousand. Desirable features are: a frequency response of 20-20,000 Hz ±2db or better; signal-to-noise or -75 db or better; harmonic distortion of .10% or lower; at least ±12 db per channel control range; separate channel controls in stereo units; input/ output *and* record/ monitor connection jacks plus record, monitor and by-pass switches. In addition, calibrating record, tape and meter will be needed to tune a listening area to a 'flat' response.

Before leaving the subject of equalization, a parting postscript: Shure Brothers have recently placed on the market a new concept in microphones. Their No. 516EQ E-Qualidyne Microphone has four built-in switchable frequency filters, allowing the adjustment of response at the microphone itself. Different combinations of the 4 switches produce a total of sixteen different shadings.

By now, most of us are familiar with the Dolby and dbx systems of noise reduction. These systems are essentially effective in suppressing high frequency sources, particularly tape hiss, and have to be used when recording. But many other types of unwanted noise appear after the initial recording to plague both filmmaker and hi-fi connoisseur. Clicks and pops from phono records, static, wind, mike handling, etc. are troublesome problems. Not too many years ago, the only way these noises could be removed was to monitor the tape by hand over the head and, as each pop was located, stop and cut out the half inch or so of affected tape and re-splice, repeating the process for each pop until the entire tape was clean—a rather laborious process.

But the basic characteristic of this type of noise—an extremely sharp peak and decay—enables an electronic circuit to distinguish such a pop from the regular signal, remove it and fill that fractional second void with some of the signal immediately preceding the pop—decidedly easier, faster and more exact than the cut-and-splice method. This is the impulse noise filter and, though similar circuitry has been used to squelch ignition noises in auto radios for some time, the first designs to emerge on the hi-fi market are the SAE model 5000 Impulse Noise Reduction System at an advertised price of only $200 (US) and the Burwen Research Model TNE 7000 for $299.

Sustained noise, obviously, cannot be filtered out by an impulse circuit, but several systems are available to minimize pre-existing hiss and hash. For the most part, they work on either of two principles—automatic high frequency cut-off above the varying program signal or expanding the program signal so as to increase the separation between signal and hash. In either method the noise remains under the signal and is masked by it. The expander function of the compander (compressor/ expander) may have reduced effectiveness when used for a track because the final signal is compressed to comply with the dynamic limitations of the optical track. At least half a dozen manufacturers are marketing either dynamic filters or companders at prices ranging between $130 and $650 (US).

Filmmakers occasionally have problems with specific frequencies, particularly 24, 48, 50, 60, 100 & 120 hz. The professional sound studio has 'notch' filters to remove these problems but none are presently available on the consumer market. The only alternative to making one would be using a paragraphic equalizer which could be tuned to a very narrow bandwidth.

And now for the "bombshells!"

3M is the first of the tape manufacturers to announce the release of a new audio tape material which will surpass even the best chromium tapes. Called Metafine IV, it employs metallic particles rather than oxides as the magnetic medium. In properly adjusted recorders, it can be expected to produce double the signal output and perhaps twice the high frequency range of the best chromes! On paper, this means that a cassette deck operating at 1/ 2 the current standard speed of 1-7/ 8 ips (15/ 16 ips) will be able to match the fidelity of the top current models. The fly-in-the-ointment, however, is that this tape material requires design changes in the recorder, particularly the biasing.

Bob Parent is a New York freelance photographer-filmmaker. He is a member of SMPTE, an instructor and a member of the Board of Directors of the Millenium Film Workshop, and a member of AIVF.

The other major new development has been introduced by Hitachi. It is a playback head utlizing a "Hall effect" semiconductor instead of a coil. Some of the advantages of the "Hall element" are improvements in both high and low frequency reproduction and a substantial reduction in the space occupied in the head assembly. The latter reduces the distance between record and playback gaps enabling the use of separate heads, each one with optimum characteristics for its function.

And finally, both "bombshells" can be expected to burst over the continent sometime in 1978.

Names and addresses of manufacturers:

BSR (USA) Limited
Consumer Products Group
Route 303
Blauvelt, NY 10913

SAE Scientific Audio Electronics, Inc.
P.O. Box 60271 Terminal Annex
Los Angeles, CA 90060

White Instruments, Inc.
P.O. Box 698
Austin, TX 78767

Soundcraftsmen
1721 Newport Circle
Santa Ana, CA 92705

Shure Bros., Inc.
222 Hartrey Ave
Evanston, IL 60204

Phase Linear
20121 48th Ave West
Lynnwood, WA 98036

dbx, Inc.
71 Chapel St
Newton, MA 02195

RG, Inc.
No address available

Rauland-Borg Corp
3535 W. Addision St
Chicago, IL 60618

Dynaco, Inc.
Box 88, Coles Rd
Blackwood, NJ 08012

Klark-Technik
Hammond Industries
155 Michael Dr
Syosset, NY 11791

UREI
8460 San Fernando Rd
Sun Valley, CA 91352

Orban Parasound
680 Beach St.
San Francisco, CA 94109

Pioneer Electronics Inc.
85 Oxford Dr
Moonachie, NJ 07074

MXR Innovations, Inc.
277 N. Goodman St
Rochester, NY 14607

Source Engineering
No address available

Burwen Research
KLH
30 Cross St
Cambridge, MA 02139

Canadian addresses:

BSR Limited
Muscan Enterprises Ltd.
970 MacEachran
Montreal

Orban Parasound
No Canadian address available

UREI
No Canadian address available

Phase Linear
H. Roy Gray
14 Laidlaw Blvd.
Markham, Ontario

SAE Scientific
The Pringle Group
30 Scarsdale Road
Toronto

White Instruments
White Electronic Diversified
3041 Universal
Mississauga, Ontario

Soundcraftsmen
The Pringle Group
30 Scarsdale Road
Toronto

Shure Bros., Inc.
A.C. Simmonds
285 Yorkland Blvd.
Willowdale, Ontario

dbx
The Pringle Group
30 Scarsdale Rd.
Toronto

Rauland-Borg Corp
Dynaco Canada Ltd.
109 Montée de Liesse
Montreal

Klark-Technik
No Canadian address available

Pioneer Electronics Inc
S.H. Parker
65-67 Lesmill
Don Mills, Ontario

Burwen Research
The Pringle Group
30 Scarsdale Road
Toronto

MXR Innovations, Inc.
No Canadian address available

FROM THE FESTIVALS

What's up in Canada

Montreal's Le Festival de la critique's organizers openly declared their intention to show more 'difficult' films, and a further desire to fight the concentration of powerful financial interests involved in film distribution. La critique defined itself as being more "québécois," that is, national, in its orientation than the soon-to-follow Festival des Films du Monde. The question was, of course, one of spirit. At the Ottawa festival's bureau, the definition of the critic's festival was more on the line of the "select ciné-club."

La critique had to its advantage a careful, simple and well-defined programming, a physical centralisation of activity, and therefore a steady attendance. The opening night screening of Claude Goretta's *La Dentellière* was followed by seven days of noon-time forums with filmmakers and three successive screenings in the evening—in other words, an intent festival-goer could take it all in.

The most successful contribution to the critic's festival came from Greek filmmaker Theodore Angelopoulos, who came with his films *Les Chasseurs* and *Le Voyage des Comédiens*. His films—long, beautiful, highly symbolic and with a strong undercurrent of political complexity—represented the extreme of the festival's ambitions. The audience was generally patient—and often delighted by some truly inspired images. The critics raved.

La Dentellière, and the Italian-Canadian co-production by Ettora Scola, *Une Journée Particulière* (which closed the festival), were somewhat out of tone with the rest of the festival—more commercial, less cut off from popular audiences: The *La Dentellière* screening, and particularly the presence of the extremely talented Isabelle Huppert, came across as a pre-publicity stunt for Les Films Mutuels, which will distribute the Cannes success later in the fall. *La Journée Particulière*, a beautiful story about a chance, spur-of-the-moment affair between a housewife and an intellectual homosexual, was a bit distorted by the too obviously anti-typecasting of Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni in the lead roles.

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Ne laissons pas les morts enterrer les morts

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Holly Dressel

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The other major new development has been introduced by Hitachi. It is a playback head utlizing a "Hall effect" semiconductor instead of a coil. Some of the advantages of the "Hall element" are improvements in both high and low frequency reproduction and a substantial reduction in the space occupied in the head assembly. The latter reduces the distance between record and playback gaps enabling the use of separate heads, each one with optimum characteristics for its function.

And finally, both "bombshells" can be expected to burst over the continent sometime in 1978.

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SAE Scientific Audio Electronics, Inc.
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Evanston, IL 60204

Phase Linear
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dbx, Inc.
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Newton, MA 02195

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No address available

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Dynaco, Inc.
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Klark-Technik
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UREI
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Markham, Ontario

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with several young French filmmakers—a lively protest against Bessy's cry that filmmaking in the world is dying. Deleau himself (though less passionately than the filmmakers—particularly Laurent Heyneman, director of *La Question*) said openly and loudly that what the Montreal festivals were missing was local participation. But they strongly denounced the Québécois filmmakers' complaining, whining attitude, and said that although they shared their views entirely, they felt it was up to the Quebec filmmakers themselves to take their fate in their own hands—to rent a theatre, to get together and create a parallel to the official festivals—following the ten-year example of success at La Quinzaine des Réalisateurs.

The local filmmakers' boycott did at least spark discussion of the Quebec phenomenon of a lively young cinema that had had a very fertile period and had then slumped. The visiting filmmakers expressed a desire to see more Canadian films distributed in their countries, where only a few Canadian filmmakers are known—and only by a very select group.

Carmel Dumas

There were no juries or awards at the Montreal World Film Festival (Festival des Films du Monde). Films seemed to have been chosen as much by country as by reputation or subject; the gossip before screenings had it that there had been no comprehensive pre-screening by the organizers, which might have eliminated some of the more obvious dogs.

Third World films were well-represented, as well as first films by young French filmmakers—showcased in the Perspectives of French Cinema category—including Laurent Heyneman's important *La Question*, Pascal Kané's *Dora et la lantern magique,* and Christian Bricout's *Paradiso*. In addition to the Howard Hawks, Fellini and Olivier retrospectives, there was a rather bizarre category called "Canadians in Hollywood," included in which were U.S. movies using an actor born in this country (Geneviève Bujold in *Earthquake,* Yvonne de Carlo in *Band of Angels*, Glenn Ford in *The Long Ride Home*.) There was a section for independent or experimental films, and one for this year's Canadian films (fattened by the ubiquitous co-productions, made possible by generous tax exemptions), which included *Welcome to Blood City* (need I say more), *The Uncanny* (cats are the villains), and *Rituals*, (*Deliverance* in Northern Ontario). There were some classier all-Canadian films as well—Robin Spry's NFB production *One Man*, which did well at Cannes and elsewhere, the moody hymn to the Prairies *Why Shoot the Teacher*, and the enthusiastically received *Skip Tracer*.

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The audience for the 2nd Annual Toronto Festival of Festivals was mixed: film students, local film buffs, industry people, the press and film media, each seemingly interested in separate aspects of the festival but least of all in the galas—premiere screenings didn't attract large audiences. The exception was the New York-acclaimed, Canadian-made *Outrageous.*

As could be expected of the rather self-conscious local film crowd, response to the Toronto-made film was enthusiastic if a trifle chauvinistic. *One Man* and *J.A. Martin: Photographe,* the other Canadian films given gala screenings, were also well-received but *Outrageous* was awarded a standing ovation and brought an aura of excitement to the galas series.

Attendance at premieres lagged for several reasons: these performances were open only to holders of the most expensive ($125) passes or purchasers of high-priced single tickets; personal scheduling of choices was simplified if one waited a day to see the premiere (the only films to be screened twice); and lesser-billed offerings were usually more promising.

Competing with the galas were nine Max Ophuls films, an "update" series selected by Paris critic David Overbey, made up of the current work of European and Asian filmmakers, a series of director Agnes Varda's favourites, new Greek films and English Canada's largest screening of Quebec films.

At screenings, seminars and parties festival-goers could mingle with stars and other film notables: Donald Sutherland, Peter O'Toole, Susannah York, Francine Racette, Wilt Chamberlain (now a producer), Peter Ustinov; directors Capra, Pontecorvo, Varda; critics William Wolfe and John Simon; and others. Henry Winkler, who previewed scenes from his new movie, made the biggest splash and grabbed media attention for the festival when he spoke at the opening luncheon. But the most visible stars were festival director Bill Marshall and cohorts, always recognizable in their gold "marshalls" badges.

There was little question that the 1977 Festival of Festivals was better received than last year's. The local press was less guarded in its occasional praise, and U.S. distributors were more co-operative about providing films. Not so the Ontario censor board which again wielded its authority, cutting a few minutes from two films and enough from Chantal Ackerman's *Je, Tu, Il, Elle* to cause festival programmers to cancel its screening.

Next year festival organizers want to find a more centralized location for the Toronto festival which they hope will become more of a focus for the entire Canadian film industry. Looking longingly at Cannes, they even have vague hopes of it becoming something of a North American marketplace.

Laurie Deans

Laurie Deans is a Toronto writer and *Take One*'s book editor.

LETTER FROM SOUTH AFRICA

ERIC LIKNAITZKY

Censored

Ours is a country of "Christian Nationalism." None of us here at the tip of Africa are quite sure what this means, though Prime Minister Vorster did try to explain it in a speech some thirty odd years ago. The crucial sentence reads: "In Germany they call it National Socialism, in Italy Fascism, in South Africa we call it Christian Nationalism."

Here in South Africa White is Right because White is Might. Confronted by the visible dichotomy of Rich White and Poor Black, many Whites are led to believe that they are well-off, "lucky," and—most dangerously of all—"free." For never was "freedom" further from such a patently privileged group, and nowhere is that freedom, or lack of it, felt more than in the arts, especially the cinema.

Our local filmmakers are a subservient bunch, throwing out endless pro-government propaganda pieces, always banal and unwatchable. They do well in the rural areas, though, from where the government draws most of its support. The single director of any consequence, Ross Devenish—whose *Boesman and Lena* is the most impressive full feature ever made in this country—has a great deal of difficulty finding financing for his films. But that is the way things work here: mindless, one-dimensional entertainment films are welcomed.

The government is obsessed with keeping us "pure." None of this Western permissiveness for Christian South Africa. So there is no cinema on Sundays (except through the film societies, which I'll deal with later). The reasoning is that Sunday cinema will affect church attendances, and that there's something immoral about sitting in a cinema on God's Day when you could be resting at home watching the numerous church services on government-controlled TV.

Of all the indignities the cinemagoer in South Africa has to put up with (besides being segregated racially), the most damaging and frustrating of all is the censorship system. The government reveals itself for what it is in the pernicious workings of the ominous sounding Directorate of Publications, also known as the Publications Control Board (PCB). 1940's morality is fanatically propagated by the Board, which refuses to come to terms with nudity, crude language ("goddamn" is a prohibited word on our screens), and the fact that Blacks are *people*, not gormless labour units.

Of course, all cinemas throughout the country are racially segregated. Until recently the censorship system approved films for viewing by a particular racial group only. So when Penn's *The Chase* was first released it was passed for "Whites Only," thus prohibiting the so-called "Coloureds" (people of mixed blood) and Blacks from seeing the film. *The Godfather* on its release was also a Whites Only film. (Puzo's book is banned to everyone). Other films were passed for White and "Coloured" viewing but were prohibited to "Bantu" (Blacks). Thus a White child of twelve was permitted to see a film that was prohibited to (say) a Black university graduate.

Six or seven years ago films like *In the Heat of the Night* and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* were banned outright. There was a time, in fact, when all Sidney Poitier films were automatically banned: this uppity nigger wasn't getting his smug mug on our All-White screens. Things have changed slightly since then and most of these films have been resubmitted and passed.

A crucial section of the Publications Act states that "no film likely to be offensive to a particular racial group, or which is likely in any way to harm race relations" may be screened in South Africa. Of course this kind of authoritarian legislation is open to countless different interpretations and is regularly abused by the PCB. So on the one hand, Sidney Poitier marrying a White girl is seen as a danger to "race relations" while on the other, Jacopetti's sadistic, fabricated *Africa Addio* (banned in most European countries) is acceptable fare. The spectacle of savage Blacks participating in cold-blooded murder and cruelty is just the kind of image of Blacks the government wants to confront the Whites with. Anything that increases the fear of Black Rule is considered essential: it makes us feel more at home with our alleged "traditional way of life."

Unlike books, films can be cut, and over 80% of the films we see are mutilated in one way or another. For example, films like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Dog Day Afternoon, All the President's Men* and *French Connection II* were all seen here but they were *extensively* cut. The main objection to these films was the "undesirable" language used. According to the Act, any reference to God (e.g. for Christ's sake, godammit) must be eliminated. Also taboo is any "foul" language or any "lewd" reference to parts of the body.

The tragic result of all this is direct collaboration between the local distributors and the studios overseas. Specially doctored "soft" versions are prepared for South African consumption. So when Popeye Doyle in *French Connection II* yells "Where's my fucking gun?" we in South Africa hear "Where's my frigging gun?" If words aren't substituted, there is merely a confusing silence. In *Cuckoo's Nest,* Jack Nicholson simply mouths a silent "fuck."

Eric Liknaitzky is a free-lance film reviewer for the *Cape Times*—Cape Town's morning daily—and runs a cinema specialising in the screening of non-commercial films.

These methods primarily serve to create an air of seediness not evident in the original. They emphasise rather than detract from the "offensive" scenes. But cutting rather than banning is a preferred method. For the government, there is less criticism from abroad; for the distributors, more money. The local distributors, taking their cue from the government, now cut their own films *before* submitting them to the PCB. The reasoning here is that the PCB might be outraged at certain sequences in a film and ban it outright. If, however, the distributors eliminate the meatier sections before submission the PCB may cut it further but is less likely to ban it.

It should be made clear that while the film censorship system is a source of outrage to intellectuals, it remains a peripheral issue in South Africa. Here where people are regularly detained indefintely

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without trial, and where the detainees die at the rate of one a month (falling out of windows, down stairs, slipping on soap, hanging—these are the official "causes," which no thinking person believes), the banning and censoring of films, though symptoms of the same diseases, are certainly less of an issue than in Britain or the US.

If one is to remain even remotely in touch with films outside the commercial circuit, membership in at least one film society is essential. Film societies (being private clubs) are not forcibly segregated. They are the only places where Black and White Africans can watch films in the same cinema. But the societies do have difficulty keeping up with the current cinema (no Fassbinder) and import only about half a dozen "new" films each year (they're stronger on the thirties and forties "classics" and not too bad on the more recent stuff). Society favourites include Jancso's *The Round Up,* Godard's *Vivre Sa Vie,* Lang's *M* and *Metropolis* and Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad.*

The once flourishing "home movie" market which, through a loophole in the law, allowed individuals to screen films in their homes without having to submit them to the board, has been the only ray of light in South Africa's Dark Cinema.

But the future does not look bright. South Africa has long been a police state for Blacks and it is rapidly moving in that direction for Whites. Culturally the country is stagnant. Creativity is dulled, even discouraged in this brutal, violent climate. All that thinking people, Black and White, have left is hope and determination.

The struggle continues. ●

SOUND TRACKS

ROBERT FIEDEL

A Citadel of Soundtrack Riches

The major record companies' preoccupation with mass marketing and broad interest products rarely permits meaningful recording activity in special interest areas. This is particularly true in the field of film music where the major labels have shown little interest (apart from the trickling of new soundtrack releases and RCA's now inactive "Classic Film Score" series). Thus the responsibility of supplying film music connoisseurs with new and significant recordings has been left to the buffs themselves.

Noted film historian and film music devotee Tony Thomas fortunately decided to accept this challenge. Following the pattern of Elmer Bernstein's Film Music Collection and John Lasher's Entr'acte label, Thomas established Citadel Records, the third in this elite triumvirate of recording organizations devoted exclusively to film music and related material.

With three separate LPs, Jerry Goldsmith is the composer best represented on Citadel. The welcome reissue of his 1966 score for *The Blue Max* (CT-6008) happily substitutes some original Goldsmith for the gratuitous source music on the original Mainstream LP, and reminds us of the composer's often overlooked talent for expansive, romantic expression. This is a complexly structured, large-scale score whose intricate contrapuntal lines, thrilling orchestral effects and overall effectiveness clearly make it one of Goldsmith's most conscientious efforts to date.

Typical of the more modernistic, avant-garde style with which Goldsmith is usually identified are his scores for *Freud* and *The Cassandra Crossing.* The music for John Huston's *Freud,* which makes its LP debut on Citadel (CT-6019), is an early landmark in Goldsmith's career. Dating from 1962, it was his seventh film assignment and his first significant use of atonality in a feature film. The main title's pizzicato tone-row against hypnotically repeating pedal point chords quickly establishes an appropriately neurotic mood for the story of Freud's discovery of psychoanalysis and the dark regions of the human mind.

Goldsmith's recent *The Cassandra Crossing* (CT-6020) is a competent thriller score. Especially apparent here is Goldsmith's movement between atonality and tonal chromaticism and his skilful integration of electronic effects—a singular method which is quite definitely the most impressive of Goldsmith's many musical identities.

Citadel's Henry Mancini disc (CT-6015) features excerpts from Orson Welles' 1958 *film noir* classic, *Touch of Evil,* and a little-known, bizarre thriller, *The Night Visitor. Touch of Evil,* once available on the obscure Challenge label, is generally regarded as Mancini's first original film composition. Essentially monothematic and scored for Latin dance band, its gaudy mambo rhythms and incessant bongos provide the perfect accompaniment for the film's seamy border town setting and lurid plot.

The Night Visitor score is unique in that it deviates totally from the traditional Mancini pop sound. To establish a suitable ambience for this twisted tale of madness, murder and revenge set against the barren Swedish winter landscape, Mancini uses woodwinds, various keyboard instruments and sparse, non-melodic lines for a bleak effect. In addition, to suggest emotional imbalance, Mancini cleverly tunes one piano and one harpsichord down a quarter tone, repeating a device he used successfully in *Wait Until Dark.* All of this really isn't very listenable, but the overall effect is impressively eerie.

Alfred Newman's talents as both composer and conductor are showcased on Citadel's *Alfred Newman: Hollywood Maestro* (CT-6003). Culled from various Majestic and Mercury recordings of the '40s and '50s and from rare discs in Newman's personal collection, this LP devotes one side to Newman's film music and the other to light classical pieces conducted by Newman. Most film music buffs agree that no one has been able to conduct Newman's music with the sensitivity and compassion with which the composer himself performed his works. The reason for this high esteem becomes obvious when listening to the film score excerpts on this album. For example, the cut from Newman's exquisite *How Green was My Valley,* alone worth the price of the disc, is played with such poignancy and inner warmth as to make any other performance inevitably inferior.

Not only are the Newman trademarks—the poetic modulations, contrapuntal appoggiaturas and sublime octave string effects—delineated in these recordings of his own scores, Newman also stresses these elements in, and thereby personalizes, the music of other composers on this album. His rendition of Gershwin's Second Prelude in an orchestral arrangement is explicitly true to the composer's style and intention and yet sounds almost as though Gershwin penned the piece with Newman's hand. In short, these are all performances of unparalleled intimacy which, needless to say, fashion a disc of immeasurable value.

Robert Fiedel teaches film at Queen's College, CUNY, and has recently been named film music critic for *High Fidelity* magazine.

In addition to film music recordings, Citadel offers two releases which explore the concert repertoire of composers known primarily for their work in films. The first is a reissue of a very rare, long out-of-print M-G-M album of music by Miklos Rozsa (CT-6001). Included are the orchestral versions of The Vintner's Daughter, Opus 23a, a lovely set of variations on a French folksong, and the colorful Hungarian Serenade, Opus 25. Inexplicably absent, however, is the North Hungarian Peasant Songs and Dances, Opus 5, which also appeared on the original M-G-M recording. Even minus this last work, the Citadel LP is an important addition to the Rozsa discography. The charm, structural perfection and unquestionably Hungarian character of these pieces are exemplary of Rosza's artistry and prove just how little difference there is between his approach to concert hall and film music composition.

The responsibility of supplying film music connoisseurs with new and significant recordings has been left to the buffs themselves.

The second release, appropriately titled *Wunderkind!* (CT-6009), is a newly recorded collection of three very early piano pieces by the young Erich Korngold, performed by the noted pianist, Antonin Kubalek. Der Schneemann (The Snowman), Don Quixote Suite and the Piano Sonata No. 1 in D Minor, composed by Korngold at ages eleven and twelve, circa 1908, first brought his prodigious talent to the attention of the musical luminaries of the time, including Gustav Mahler. The two bright, frothy tone poems and the amazingly contemplative sonata display, even at this early period, Korngold's gift for melody, pictorial evocation and dramatic development, qualities which would later find a suitable outlet in his classic film scores of the '30s and '40s.

Those are only the highlights of the Citadel catalog. Other releases feature the music of Jerry Fielding, George Dunning, Hans J. Salter, Elmer Bernstein, Alex North and many others. Citadel has also custom-produced several recordings of Max Steiner's film music available exclusively to members of The Max Steiner Music Society. Unfortunately, Citadel releases are often difficult to find except at specialty shops and from mail order dealers. These recordings may, however, be ordered directly from Citadel if unavailable through local channels. Information may be obtained by writing to Citadel Records at Post Office Box 1662, Burbank, California 91507. For information on the special Max Steiner LPs and other rare Steiner recordings, contact The Max Steiner Music Society at Post Office Box 45713, Los Angeles, California 90045.

Though titles have not yet been announced, many new Citadel releases are promised for the future. If past performance is any indication of what we may expect, Tony Thomas and his Citadel label will continue to give film music fans much to be grateful for.

DISH NIGHT

WALDO LYDECKER

FESTIVITIES: The New York Film Festival, which hits town hot on the heels of the San Gennaro Festival in Little Italy each year, got off to a sorry start with an opening night gala held in the State Theater of Lincoln Center. If you think I have an easy job *you* should have been trying to spot media stars among the minglers; It was definitely a John Springer, not a Bobby Zarem list—we saw men dancing with their own mothers. Diane Keaton stayed long enough to give one lah-dee-dah and then left, trailing Woody (who was dressed as Annie Hall) and Michael Murphy. There was a brief moment of panic when people spotted Helen Scott and assumed that Truffaut couldn't be far behind, but he didn't arrive until later in the week. Susan Sarandon, fresh from her triumph in *The Other Side of Midnight,* represented Hollywood, Wim Wenders represented West Germany, and Lester Persky represented East Hampton. Depardieu, in leather, held up one end of the bar. This year, the New York *Times* assigned Judy Klemesrud to cover all of the festival parties, reviews of which ran side by side with those of the films themselves; for once, the movies fared better. At the French Film Office party a couple of days later, Truffaut held court in a corner with his *Man Who Loved Women* star Brigitte Fossey while Louis Malle complained about the "impossible" mother of a certain child star / *Penthouse* girl.

ELITISTS: Most noticeable no-shows at the *Bobby Deerfield* party were on and off-screen co-stars Al Pacino and Marthe Keller. Keller was apparently displeased with the way Columbia was handling the ad campaign, which showed Pacino soulfully solo. The film, which is based on the life of the father of the girl who threw the Tic-Tac party in Central Park last summer, drew an audience which included Jackie K. Onassis, Woody and Diane—both dressed as Annie Hall, Mick Jagger, and Margaret Trudeau's ex-roomie Yasmin Khan. Later in the week, fun couple Al and Marthe did turn up at a party given in honour of the Film Festival given at the Jean Renoir Theater, just to prove that they are not anti-fun.

READ DIS OR ELSE: Joining the ranks of Marcel Proust and Tony Curtis, poster boy Sylvester Stallone will have his first novel published next year; it's called *Paradise Alley* and we've heard that it's a fleshed-out version of the screenplay Stallone had been trying to peddle for years before his overnight success in *Lords of Flatbush.*

V LOVES????; Don't look for another *Gable and Lombard* when Allan Carr brings his version of Anne Edwards' best-selling biography of tragic Vivien Leigh to the screen. One thing will be missing from the love scenes—Laurence Olivier. The late actress' ex-husband will not give his permission to be represented on celluloid. Marisa Berenson has been mentioned for the role of England's most glamorous neurotic, but then she and Candy Bergen are always being mentioned for the roles before anyone else. If you were disappointed that Edwards didn't turn up enough dirt about Leigh's affair with Peter Finch, not to worry. It will be extensively dished by Elaine Dundy in her upcoming Peter Finch bio.

THE CASTING COUCH: Bette Midler, who has already announced her intentions of playing Dorothy Parker, will first tackle Janis Joplin in *Pearl.* Bette is brushing up to be the Paul Muni of the seventies... Tony Perkins, who directed his wife Berry this year in summer stock, is putting her into more professional hands; they are both set to co-star in Bob Altman's next film... Joining The Supremes ex-lead singer and Sidney Lumet's mother-in-law in *The Wiz* will be Steven Spielberg's dog, who has won the pivotal role of Toto after a talent hunt comparable in scope to David O. Selznick's famous search for Scarlett.

THE LADY TAKES A TRIP: Lina Wertmüller would not leave her yacht, on which she was taking a late August cruise on the Adriatic, to finish cutting her new movie in time for screening by the N.Y. Festival, and she didn't care what Gil Shiva and Richard Roud said about her.

SHMATA CHIC: The Annie Hall Look, created by designer Ruth Morley, was so influential that Bloomingdale's opened a boutique specializing in clothes Annie might wear. Whispers among the rag trade indicate that the next big trend will be based on *Golda,* in which Santo Loquasto is dressing Anne Bancroft in $3.98 housedresses from Mays.

GOTTA KEEP DANCIN': There is no such thing as a happy ending for this column in today's troubled world. Just as we were all cheered by the news that Mick and Bianca Jagger are back together, word came of the tragic George and Alana Hamilton split. Alana tried her best to dance her sorrows away at Studio 54 with Mick Flick, the Mercedes-Benz heir. ●

GROUCHO MARX

A Retrospective by David Thomson

The death of Julius Henry Marx released not just affectionate tributes moved by recognition that one more enfeebled man had gone. There were also reverent anthologies of his scabrous jokes, his theorems of the absurd and his bull-baiting routines—as if Groucho Marx had been simply a comedian or a funny fellow. More important, he was a desperate man, striding through his own collapse and implausibility, but weak or sly at the knees. Yet his desperation was never soothed or abated by laughter earned by the remorseless, humourless attempts to be amusing. Comedy was Groucho's treadmill, and some primal scream awaited him if he ever stepped off it. In real life he was, at the very least, a thoughtful letter-writer, a real, kindly human-being, anxious to please and be pleased. On the screen, though, he was a synthetic creature, immune to approval, reconstructed after some devastating breakdown, screwed together and oiled by the shrill impulse to wisecrack. No one revealed as well as Groucho that the comic might be the wreck of a wise man, now irretrievably cracked and held in place by a cigar, a daubed moustache and horn glasses that barely hid the face of a startled rodent.

Groucho never seemed to understand or be nourished by his own jokes: he was deadpan because his mirth had withered long since. Only a smirking grimace encouraged us into the silence left for laughter. He was carried along by the momentum of the jokes, skirting some pit of serpents at man's feet as well as the vapid suggestions that idealism and sentiment might bridge it safely. He was stripped and marooned, isolated from gentleness or reflection, balance or subtlety, bristling with his mania for lethal, heartless hurry. He was not eloquent, but he was incontinent with words to distract himself from the bleak destination of all that hurry. He reads so well that one wonders if he is a radio or stage comic hijacked by an insolent subway crazy: 'a funny thing happened to me on the way to the theater tonight... a kind of bloodless Dracula possessed me, and this 'tache is the scab from so much deadly kissing.'

Groucho was aghast at being trapped in brotherhood with Chico and Harpo. Indeed, the Marx Brothers are the single most emphatic evidence we have of the macabre ridiculousness of family attachments. The trio wandered in demented half-worlds, unable to escape being brothers, but thoroughly alien to one another. Except that Chico could interpret for Harpo, leaving Groucho in more entrenched, poignant solitude, a talker to himself who buttonholes stupid listeners deaf to his slippery poetry. The other two never seemed distressed by their plight; their daftness was a perverse protection from self-awareness or responsibilities. But Groucho is twisted by the pain of understanding at least the notion of order, purpose and sanity.

Chico and Harpo were content with being a doltish garden gnome and a frenzied rag doll; they had their grails guaranteed—pianos and harps materialising out of jungle decor. But Groucho is recognisably a disastrous version of Adolphe Menjou: he tries to wear morning dress; to be suave and authoritative; and he is dedicated to the two discreet targets of the screen's sophisticated man—money and sex. His humiliation is all the greater in that he bears the burden of plot in their disconcertingly unrelated adventures. He suffers from a heritage of purpose and organisation; he plots while the others merely react; his cover-up of crackling, loony intelligence does not conceal his thwarted yearning for structure. The brothers are infants or zoo animals, gratified and enraged by passing moments. Groucho achieves neither pleasure nor anger: he is a weird, wistful romantic designing a future where Margar-

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David Thomson is the author of *A Biographical Dictionary of Film*, published by William Morrow.

et Dumont's bosom-bank will finance orgies with the first fifty available dolls. At least fifty would be required if the plaintive dissatisfaction of every pliant girl is to be drowned in the apprehensive rapture of those waiting.

The labelled kidding of comedy barely disguises a plan of unmitigated depravity. Groucho's need for money is constitutional, not spendthrift. It has as little restraint as it sees use. Money is balm, shameless and undiscriminating—no wonder he took to game shows and their orgasmic bliss at winning. In slower, more intimate films—with the Brothers he is never alone, always a public Prometheus gnawed at by frustration and interference—he could quickly become a murderer. He is midway between Jarry's Père Ubu and Monsieur Verdoux, and he is capable of a cruelty to astonish Lugosi or Vincent Price. Imagine what a sinister 'Concentration Camp Erhardt' he might have made. That abandoning of warmth and humanity would permit any outrage. He is amoral, perverse and accurate; he would make candies out of nipples. Groucho's lurid persona could have sustained gruesome exploitation pictures; chainsaws and thumbscrews could have performed his dreams without drooling or hesitation. A natural, innate sadism flowers from his pain, and Margaret Dumont is the placid sponge for outrage and acid, a bourgeoise who absorbs every abuse invented by her tortured son. He frets over filching her money so as not to admit that she would give it to him as part of herself.

Not that Groucho would use or spend money. He abides only by man's chronic hope for it. He is as faithful and instinctive an adherent of it as a Dostoyevksy gambler: thus the Brothers Marx, with patricide and spiritual quest reduced to slapstick and how many people can you cram into a cabin. We might even add that Julius Henry is a dutiful model for old Karl's diagnosis of money as a drug that has overwhelmed all man's ulterior or higher motives. The money imperative has made Groucho into a bigot, a bore, as soiled as faecal coins, but a visionary—the absurdity is so exactly pitched that we laugh without being wounded by the scathing comment on our own gentlemanly tact with money. Groucho would have made a fine Godfather, but no councillor could ever persuade him to give to charity as a trade-off with public hypocrisy.

Whereas sex has already ravaged Groucho. What is that crouched walk but the result of massive rupture or the effort to nurse putrid social disease? Yet Groucho still submits formal application to be passionate, brimming and an ardent consumer of women—it is the actual absence of sensuality that makes his turning murderer all the more certain.

But Groucho's most crushing handicap is his sole asset: words, speech, the monotonous generating of quips, barbs and ripostes. He masturbates with sharp answers and his own hand comes away in bloody shreds. In *Monkey Business,* for instance, he contrives this goading back-chat with the ship's captain:

GROUCHO: I want to register a complaint.

CAPTAIN: Why, what's the matter?

GROUCHO: Matter enough. Do you know who sneaked into my stateroom at three this morning?

CAPTAIN: Who did?

GROUCHO: Nobody, and that's my complaint. I'm young, I want gaiety, laughter, ha-cha-cha. I want to dance. I want to dance till the cows come home.

It is authentic Groucho, trapping others into feeding him lines, unable to converse, but an isolated master at inside-out word battles, computer Hal in overdrive. The high, harrowed voice that claims to have been left out of abandon and wildness is literary, donnish even, and as ignorant of life as the plummy Hitchcock. Its regret is a sham, for the shrivelled character is appalled and threatened by experience.

In the event, Groucho is confounded by women, sex is only an idea, like money, that he is the obedient hound of. When he comes within reach of the quarry, he is perplexed and abashed. In *Duck Soup,* he falls in with one hot little number, evidently willing and ha-cha-cha, but his sexual voice is throttled by cliché-shuffling and self-sufficient verbal intercourse. Groucho will always make a pun before he does a woman; he is so tainted, it amounts to sterility:

GROUCHO: I could dance with you till the cows come home. On second thoughts I'd rather dance with the cows till you come home.

At moments of opportunity, Groucho's smouldering prick backs off, piercing himself. In *Monkey Business,* he emerges from Thelma Todd's closet to find that she wants life, laughter and gaiety, and needs no wooing. Too much for Groucho. He withdraws into surrealist anonymity:

GROUCHO: Madam, before I get through with you, you will have a clear case for divorce, and so will my wife. Now the first thing to do is to arrange for a settlement. You take the children, your husband takes the house, Junior burns down the house, you take the insurance, and I take you.

LUCILLE: But I haven't any children.

GROUCHO: That's just the trouble with this country. You haven't any children, and as for me, I'm going back in the closet where men are empty overcoats.

That is one of the saddest and most fatalistic conclusions to romance in the cinema, and it shows us a travesty of a lover pursuing activity, sexual overture and monetary lust to subdue the certainty that all action is as illusory and pointless as that of phantom shapes on a screen. Groucho's comedy is incidental to a screen presence of suppressed agony and melancholy that could lapse into inertia or destroy the rest of the world in retaliation. He was a formative screen personality, our most touching, sardonic and doomed anti-hero. He lingers in Bogart's jaunty cynics, even if he is far more honest. He is there in Verdoux and Charles Foster Kane, a man quite as alarmed by reality and just as entranced by fantastic authority. He is Jerry Lewis's ancestor, and he might be Norman Bates after thirty years in the asylum. And Groucho could have played nearly any protagonist from Bunuel—priapic thrust turning to rubber, mordant longing that hovers between rape and flowers, and booby traps dogging every act of assertion: Gaston Modot in *L'Age d'Or,* Archibaldo, El, Robinson Crusoe (with Chico as Friday), Nazarin, husband to Belle de Jour and Fernando Rey's several respectable decadents. Groucho is the wreck of romance and achievement, spreadeagled in comedies, howling out jokes till the films ceased. What a tidy, bitter horror that the real old man died hedged in by the tortuous contest of a woman and his money—'Love flies out the door when money comes innuendo.'

What a waste if we overlooked his being one of the few movie actors who surpassed photographic presence and gave us something so much more and less than a man that we discover more about ourselves. If Groucho is horrifying it is because he accelerates modern man to the point of self-destruct and ad nauseam, without ever pausing for or believing in satisfaction. Groucho is the romantic who has sadly survived the great orgy that extinguished desire and hope. Yet he wears both, still, in tatters, too proud and damaged to weep, driven instead into the contemptuous sneer of amusement.

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BOOKS

News

Two *Take One* contributors have recently had new editions published of books that were widely acclaimed when they first appeared: James Monaco's *The New Wave* is now available in a paperback edition from Oxford University Press, and the third edition of Herman G. Weinberg's *The Lubitsch Touch* has been issued by Dover Publications, revised, enlarged, and with 35 new photographs. The latter title is a marvelous account of the man whom Greta Garbo once called "the only great director I had in Hollywood."

And former *Take One* Book Editor Doug Fetherling has just had published (by Lester and Orpen, Toronto) *The Five Lives of Ben Hecht*, the first in-depth look at this extraordinary individual and his career.

New Periodicals:
The Emergency Committee to Defend Latin American Filmmakers (ECDLAF) has brought out its first newsletter, with information on the group's current campaigns, and articles on the history of repression of Latin American film professionals (13 cents in stamps, to ECDLAF, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012).

Filmmakers Europe is a new monthly publication, designed to link independent filmmakers and film exhibitors throughout Europe. It has free listings of new works by filmmakers, locations of screenings, tour schedules, and other news for those interested in independent European cinema. Further info: Filmmakers Europe, 35 Cross Street, London N.1.

Film Reader is a relatively new annual devoted to film scholarship, dedicated "to the examination and application of current film theories and critical methods." $4 apiece from Film Reader, Northwestern University, Speech Annex, Evanston, IL 60201.

Ciné-Tracts (4227 Esplanade, Montreal, Canada H2W 1T1) has its second issue out, a special on "Theoretical Perspectives in Cinema" with contributions from such people as Jeanne Allen, Stephen Heath and Judith Mayne.

While at the other end of the spectrum, the New York Times Co. has started up *Movie Spectacular*, a glossy newstand item (500,000 print-run; $1.50 cover price) that will be coming out on an irregular basis, each issue devoted entirely to one boxoffice smash (the first issue is devoted to *A Bridge Too Far*). While NYT retains full editorial control, Magazine Development Manager Porter Bibb does acknowledge that United Artists (distributors of *A Bridge*) did pay "a nominal production advance" to help the issue along. Talks are currently being held with Columbia Pictures re a similar deal on *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

It was back in 1973 that Robert LaGuardia interviewed a number of people who had known Montgomery Clift intimately and then prepared a 100-page presentation for a book he wanted to write. LaGuardia's agent sent the proposal to—and was promptly turned down by—half a dozen publishers. In 1974, another agent had no better luck with another 19 publishing houses—most of them expressing doubt that anyone would be interested in reading about a movie star who had been dead for eight years. Late that year, it finally looked as if San Francisco's Straight Arrow Books might be interested in the idea—but then Straight Arrow more or less left the business. In early 1975, 10 more submissions were made. This time Coward,

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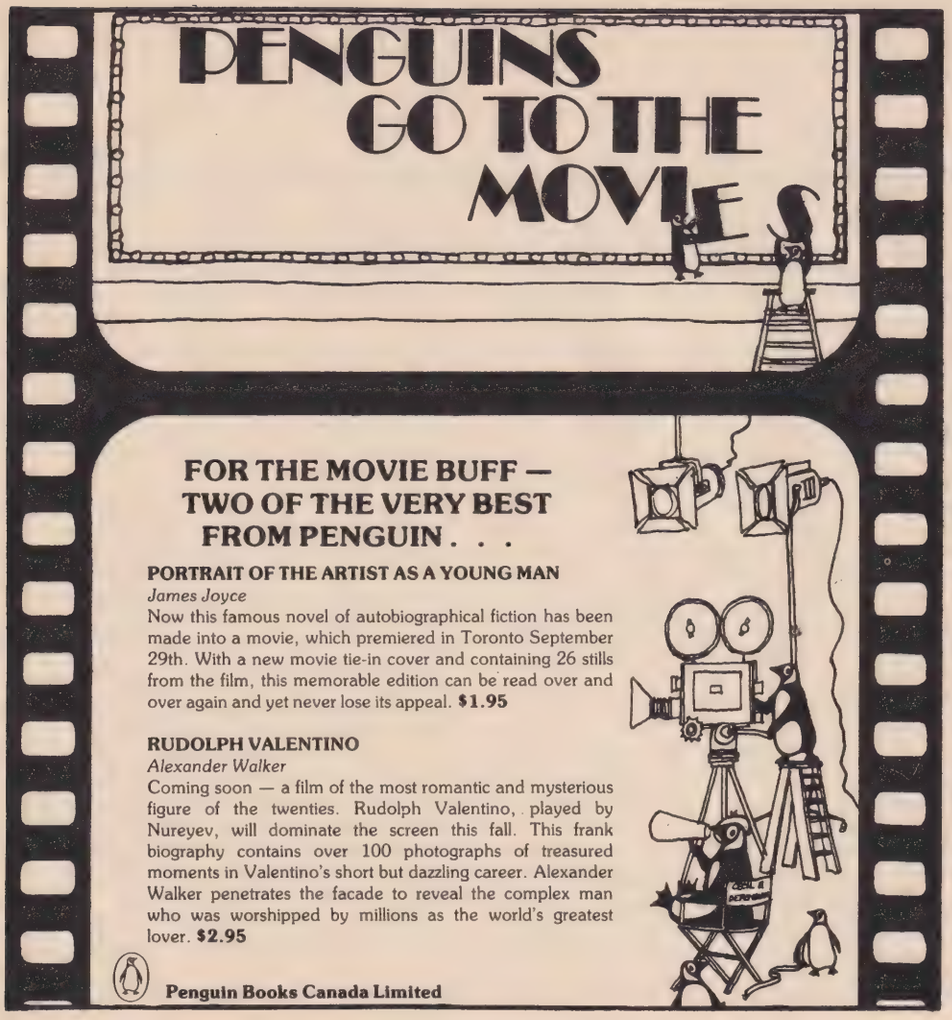
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McCann and Geoghegan contracted for the manuscript—only to turn it down (when it was handed in a year-and-a-half later) as unpublishable. Four more publishers were then approached—no luck. Finally, Arbor House (that had had a biography of Clift scheduled which fell through) grabbed LaGuardia's book and has brought it out. There are now some 52,500 copies of *Monty* in print, with average daily re-orders at 600 copies (the high was 2355 copies on August 17). The auction for the softcover rights started with a $150,000 minimum and LaGuardia is feeling pretty good about not having lost faith in the project despite all his setbacks.

It's All Rights, Ma:
First Artists has an option on *The Queen of the Ritz,* the book Samuel Marx (ex-M-G-M executive) has written about his sister, who lived through WWII in Paris as the wife of the manager of the Ritz Hotel. ... Paramount has bought film rights to Sidney (*The Other Side of Midnight*) Sheldon's next novel, *Blood Line.* ... And Paramount has also paid some $175,000 (plus 5% of the profits and additional escalation clauses) for Mary Higgins Clark's *A Stranger is Watching*. ...Frank Pierson, meanwhile, who won an Academy Award for his screenplay of *Dog Day Afternoon* and at least survived the directing of *A Star is Born,* is now writing a novel that he plans to direct as a film from his own script. The still-untitled work will be the saga of a rich American family.

Making Book:
Oxford Press is to republish Erik Barnouw's *Indian Film.* Barnouw expects to visit India late next year to update the work. ... The man who wrote and starred in *Rocky* has now written a novel, *Hell's Kitchen,* which Putnam will publish in November. Sylvester Stallone's book ("A poignant story set in the summer of 1946") has already been sold to Universal. ... Also due in November are the first two of Bantam's *Star Trek Fotonovels,* full-colour $1.95 books with 200-300 photographs and superimposed dialogue (comic-book-style) each from a favourite *Star Trek* episode. Some six titles are planned at the moment. ... One title, though, that was to have seen the light in November that now will not is John Kobal's *Rita Hayworth: The Time, the Place and the Woman.* The book, which Kobal described as "a labor of love, having taken me, since 1972, thousands of miles of travel and hours of tapes to collect interviews with the people who knew her as well as interviewing the lady herself"—that book was dropped from the David McKay fall schedule when the publisher's salesmen apparently raised objections to the proposed sale price ($14.95).

Producers Judy Steed and Joyce Wieland have now rejected a first draft screenplay of Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners* written by Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson. Apparently deciding that no Canadians will be able to do a better job, the noted nationalists have hired New York's Venable Hendon (who wrote *Alice's Restaurant*) to prepare a screen version of the book.

Reviews

The Most Important Art: East European Film After 1945 by Mira Liehm and Antonin J. Liehm. University of California Press. 1977. 463 pp. $23.50.

Few histories of American, French or Italian cinema pay much attention to politics, except as a very general background to the production of the films themselves. It is only during periods of crisis, such as the Depression or the Second World War, that there is any real correlation between Western films and the political scene and, once the crisis is over, the cinema as a whole returns to its nominally apolitical stance of providing entertainment within the accepted framework of the status quo. In Eastern Europe the case is very different and, as the Liehms make abundantly clear, the cinema of this part of the world cannot be properly understood without some knowledge of the political and historical events that have shaped the destinies of these countries during this century. In many cases, some knowledge of pre-20th century history and national traditions is also necessary, for films set in the past are often used to make an oblique comment on the contemporary scene.

Western audiences therefore need to make an effort to come to terms with the films of countries like Hungary, Poland, or Bulgaria, and in the English-speaking world at least (which has also shamefully neglected the rich literary heritage of these nations), this effort has seldom been made. Of the approximately 1500 films discussed in this book, less than 10% are probably known, even by name, to North American film-goers who would otherwise pride themselves on their knowledge of French, Italian or German cinema. Very occasionally an upsurge of interest takes place—in the Soviet cinema of the 1920s, the Polish New Wave of the late 1950s, or the Czech flowering of the mid-1960s—but this rarely persists for more than a few years and audiences who admire the revivals of Wajda's *Ashes and Diamonds,* for example, are probably blissfully unaware of his more recent and even finer work, such as *Everything For Sale, The Birch Wood,* and especially *The Wedding.*

To many in the West the link between politics and cinema in Eastern European films is embodied in the fact of censorship, and certainly one cannot read the pages dealing with Russian cinema of the 1960s or the Czech cinema after 1968 without experiencing both anger and despair. Yet we have our "tyranny of the marketplace" and very likely just as many potentially interesting films have never been made because they would be "uncommercial," or have been mutilated after completion to suit the supposed taste of the mass audience as have suffered a similar fate, for different reasons, in the East. What is perhaps more significant is that Eastern European countries should continue subsidising filmmakers who insist on turning out

subversive or disquieting films, even when these prove to be commercial failures into the bargain; and the Hungarian or Polish director, unlike his counterpart in the West, is often even actively encouraged to make films that will be "artistic."

The Liehms cover both the slightly more familiar Russian, Polish, and Czech traditions which retain strong links with the Western cultural heritage, and the—to our eyes—far more exotic and bizarre films of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, or Romania, of which we know very little more than the solitary figure of Makaveyev or the isolated appearance of films like *The Peach Thief* or *Iconostasis*. After an introduction dealing with the pre-1945 period, the authors divide their work into three main sections dealing with each country's production in turn. The decade from 1945 to 1955 saw an initial outburst of creativity almost everywhere as filmmakers celebrated their liberation from Nazi tyranny and looked towards a new and better future for their countries; within a few years this had given way almost universally to a stale conformism imposed from above by a Stalinist bureaucracy. Stalin's death in 1953 gave hope for a relaxation and films began to move cautiously towards a new outspokenness. The only country, however, where this led to anything more than the occasional and isolated work of genuine quality during this period was Poland, where Wajda, Munk, Has, Kawalerowicz and others produced a whole series of stylistically inventive and politically nonconformist films before the "victory of mediocrity" in the early 1960s. Around 1963 it was the Hungarians who took the lead with Jancso, Szabo, Gaal and a host of talented newcomers profiting from the relative liberalism of the period to ask uncomfortable and searching questions about their country's recent past and future prospects. A few years later it was the Czechs whose less sombre and more overtly iconoclastic vision gained worldwide recognition for a brief couple of years between 1966 and 1968.

There are perhaps two basic approaches that could be taken in a ground-breaking book of this kind. The first, chosen by the Liehms, is to provide an exhaustive survey that mentions almost every film of any interest whatsoever; the second is to be rather more selective and to deal in greater detail with those films and filmmakers of particular artistic or social importance. The value of the Liehms' method is that it situates the films very clearly in their political and cultural context and presents a vivid picture of the difficulties faced (and often overcome) by directors and writers attempting to tell something of the truth by means of their films. On the other hand, it means that the book is often rather exhausting reading and whole pages become little more than an endless catalogue of names. It also means that even the most important films (such as *Andrei Rublev, Loves of a Blonde,* or *Red Psalm*) have to be discussed in less than a dozen lines each, and, for those who have not seen them, the authors' assertions as to their quality have therefore to be taken very much on trust. Now that a book of this kind exists, however, it is to be hoped that distributors will give us a chance to see some of the films it discusses and that the way will open for books that examine in greater depth the achievements of artists like Chytilova, Forman, Jancso, Makaveyev, Wajda, Gaal, Nemec, Schorm, and Tarkovsky.

Graham Petrie

Fellini the Artist by Edward Murray. Frederick Ungar Publishing. 1976. 256 pp. $10.00 (In Canada: Book Centre Inc. $12.00)

"The cinema," Fellini has said, "is the unique and perfect tool to explore with precision the inner landscapes of the human being." Describing critically the nature of those "inner landscapes" is hazardous work: much of Fellini's rich, visual imagery resists verbal explication. In *Fellini the Artist,* Edward Murray recognizes the danger. Although he repeatedly explains what Fellini is "saying," his quotation marks around "saying" indicate his tentativeness in "reading" a film. By steering this kind of conservative, steadfast course throughout, Murray solidly charts the outer landscapes but ultimately contributes little original to our knowledge of Fellini's works.

The author's purpose is to provide for film students and general readers "a guideline through the cinematic technique in Fellini's films to reveal the beauty and complexity of his art and the range and depth of his personal vision of life." General readers will find the brief introduction and biography workmanlike and the critical summaries that follow clear and apparently accurate. Beginning with *The White Sheik* and omitting Fellini's three "episodes," Murray examines the works chronologically, in a style unencumbered by jargon. The critiques cannot—indeed, do not—attempt to reproduce the immediate experience of seeing the films, but they faithfully record sequences of events. Occasional references to technique—especially cinematography, montage, and structure—further enhance Murray's analysis.

Though general readers will admire *Fellini the Artist* for these positive attributes, serious film students will be less pleased. The book's greatest disservice to scholars is its incompleteness. Quotations, for example, dot the book—usually documented, occasionally not. The usefulness of Fellini's undated comments is marginal. "To myself, I seem always to be making *The White Sheik*": before *La Dolce Vita,* this remark has at least one meaning; after, another. (Fellini said it to Charles Thomas Samuels in spring, 1971.) As with other such instances, the reader should know not only the date but the source, whether Fellini wrote the comment or told it to a reporter or interviewer.

Both the filmography and the bibliography are incomplete. The filmography catalogues key personnel for Fellini's sixteen collaborations, episodes, and solo works; though it lists the principal actors, it occasionally omits their characters' full names. The fuller a filmography, the greater its use. The bibliography is disappointing:

Graham Petrie teaches at McMaster University, Hamilton, and is the author of *The Cinema of François Truffaut.*

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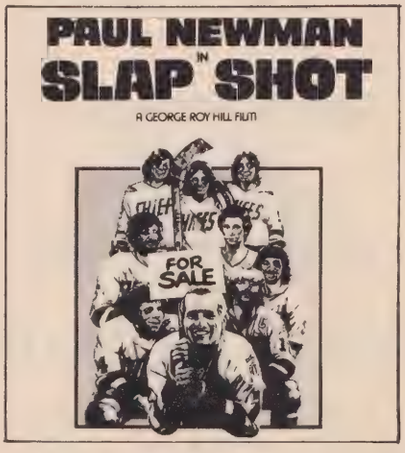

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it omits recent works and in some cases thoughtful essays (as examples: Peter Harcourt's, Harvey Cox's).

Though of some concern to scholars, these lapses in judgment are minor compared to the ill-advised exclusion from discussion of *Variety Lights*. In his work on Fellini, Gilbert Salachas writes: "Officially this film was only co-directed by Fellini. However, closer inspection discloses his personal mark from beginning to end, in the screenplay as well as in the direction." Anyone who has seen the film must acknowledge Fellini's hand: the circular structure, the ambivalence about performance, the pre-eminence of sensibility. No apprentice work, *Variety Lights* deserves study.

Two more substantial questions revolve around the book's organization and its inattention to imagery. Although the compartmentalized treatment of the films has considerable merit, it militates against a discussion of themes expressed throughout the director's work. For example, Murray mentions Fellini's religious satire,

Fellini is processions, dawns, idiots, night people, monks bearing branches, motorbikes roaring through town—images.

but he does not suggest its progress from the chorines who cross themselves before going onstage (*Variety Lights*) to the sunbathing beauties who wave to the flying statue of Jesus (*Dolce Vita*). The "complexity of [Fellini's] art" as well as the "depth of his personal vision" lies not only in discrete films but in reiteration and development over a career.

Regarding imagery, Murray acknowledges that to Fellini, the image in film is all. Here and there the author highlights notable scenes—Gelsomina at the outdoor wedding, the stunning last sequence of *Vitelloni*—but the search for what Fellini is "saying" overshadows what Fellini is showing. Such a critical stance grows increasingly perilous as one approaches the director's recent work. Generally inattentive (not really insensitive) to imagery, Murray can shed little light on why a film like *Fellini Satyricon* failed. This film's rapacious, ultimately bankrupt style impoverishes Fellini's talent, yet Murray's discussion of it and, less so, of *Amarcord* never seems to advance beyond hand wringing.

Fellini is processions, dawns, idiots, night people, monks bearing branches, motorbikes roaring through town—images. And though Murray salutes Fellini as a poet, he heeds too little a poet's essence, the image. If a film like a poem, "should not mean / But be," then surely one of cinema's most arresting moments is the appearance of the Rex in *Amarcord*. The quality of mystery, of awe, emanating from this at once majestic yet simple image is nearly inexplicable, so Murray's task here is not simple. What Murray provides, however, is not much more than a condescending remark on the origin of the image as a studio miniature.

These comments should not obscure the real worth of *Fellini the Artist*. It is concise and well written, an excellent introduction—as Murray intends—for "anyone who has ever seen a Fellini picture and who would like to know more." After reading it and learning what Fellini *said*, an uninitiated but curious viewer would no doubt be moved to discover what Fellini *showed*. Books that spark such interest are always welcome additions to film literature.

Leonard J. Leff

The Long View, An International History of Cinema by Basil Wright. Paladin. 752pp., revised and updated paperback edition. (In Canada: General, $9.95).

If you missed this remarkable book when it came out in 1974 (with too little attention on this side of the Atlantic), you can now pick it up in this new British paperback edition. No self-respecting film enthusiast should be without it.

Basil Wright, like his great colleague and friend John Grierson, is that rare film bird with the talent of practising film and peaching it as well. Wright's *Song of Ceylon*, made in the early 1930s, heads the list of the world's splendid lyric documentaries, and for many critics and filmmakers it ranks as one of the major creations in all categories of film.

Wright's book, *The Long View*, is perhaps equally important and unique. Composed with dozens of threads—historical, personal, descriptive, analytical, aesthetic, social, political, multi-national, and more—it weaves them together with well-grounded understanding of the medium and love for its achievements. Wright has the enviable gift of viewing films and filmmakers on their own terms, and responding with warmth and respect to quite contradictory styles. It is indeed *the long view*—comprehensive, clear, and written in human terms.

A perfect book? Not entirely. The interchapters, designated as Signposts that relate important film events to the politics and arts of each period, may solve some problems but they create others. And only in a footnote does Wright hurriedly mention the growing activities of women directors; an up-dating chapter, written for this new paperback edition, fails to mention women filmmakers altogether. This is, one hopes, the last important film book that will do so.

Cecile Starr

Leonard J. Leff is Assistant Professor of English at Bellevue College in Nebraska.

Cecile Starr is co-author of *Experimental Animation*.

The Rise and Fall of the Horror Film: An Historical Approach to Fantasy Cinema by David Soren. Lucas Bros. Publishers. 169 pp. $4.25.

Despite their relatively low esteem among cinema critics and educators, science fiction and horror movies have always been immensely popular and commercially successful—the phenomenal *Star Wars* being a recent example. Moreover, fantasy films enjoy significant support within the psychiatric community, who assure us of their cultural value. The eminent Carl Jung, for example, asserts convincingly in *Man and His Symbols* that such films are a way to anticipate and endure the dangers underlying existence. They provide the myth and ritual missing from modern society. Bruno Bettelheim, the famous psychologist, notes in *The Uses of Enchantment* that "To grow up well, to be able to master life, we need hopeful images..." such as those found in fantasy films.

Yet for many of us there is something disconcerting about fantasy films. They are on the outskirts of intellectual consideration: they amuse, frighten or merely distract us but seldom do they receive our serious attention. We dismiss them.

Soren sees fantasy films as providing a kind of psychic safety valve for late industrial civilization's godless and mythless culture.

However, there is a new book by Dr. David Soren for those who care about fantasy films and particularly those interested in learning about the uses and influence of art in this important film genre.

It is not a coffee table book crowded with sensational movie monster photos and strung together by a vapid text best left to the kiddies. Instead, Soren has produced a tightly-written examination of the influence of painting and sculpture—from cave paintings to Picasso—on the development of fantasy films. With the exception of Lotte Eisner's *The Haunted Screen* (which dealt with expressionist art in early German cinema), it is the most literate and thoughtful inquiry into art and supernatural films I have found.

Soren is an art historian and archaeologist at the University of Missouri. He also publishes a little magazine on horror and science fiction called *Fantastic Worlds*, and a newsletter in French for overseas readers. His narrative is chronological and written with the precision of a scientist and the self-assurance of a connoisseur.

He begins almost a century ago when motion pictures themselves were a new realization of fantasy—when audiences were astounded to see such wonders as babies eating soup or trains arriving at a station. From those early days of crude theatrics, fantasy films developed into a unique discipline demanding the most elaborate and often the most subtle uses of art. Analyzing the major works of representative fantasy filmmakers from the 1890s to today, Soren deftly shows the important influence art has had on the work of such giants of fantasy film as Méliès, Lang, Cocteau, Curtiz, Wegener, Lipsky and Kubrick. And while it may seem incongruous to equate horror movies with high art, Soren unmistakably demonstrates the debt these films and their creators owe to the art of the French academy, the symbolist and Dada movements, surrealist art, German expressionism, post-impressionism and even Bauhaus, Dutch baroque, gothic, depression modern and art nouveau.

Soren, like Bettelheim and others, sees fantasy films as providing a kind of psychic safety valve for late industrial civilization's godless and mythless culture. In his opinion, art is essential for making such films because it is through art that ancient myth and ritual is transmitted. The abstract and obvious, the subtle and specific fears and aspirations of humanity about death and destruction, unchecked science dominating the world, sexuality and man's proclivity toward violence—these are the abiding themes and recurring subjects of all our great art. Without utilizing something from this vast cultural warehouse, Soren argues, fantasy films are merely self-indulgent exercises in vanity. Using art they interpret life's mysteries anew for each generation and carry our culture into the future.

Like many film critics, Soren strongly condemns the artlessness and sensationalism of films today, particularly their gross appeal to sex, violence and brutality. Today's filmmakers "are merely technicians, machines without souls." The only solution, he concludes, is that "every budding young filmmaker should at least be forced to study Rembrandt and learn something about how an artist ... controls the subject matter and expresses its environment visually!"

This is a well written book and anyone seriously interested in art in the fantasy film should add Soren's lucid essay to his library shelf. The bibliography and index are excellent and the illustrations are appropriate. But it's a shame Soren didn't write more. I would have liked much more detail and more illustrations. The Van Gogh and Murnau comparisons, for example, were marvelously illustrated and perfectly support the premise that filmmakers can improve their work by studying great art. Regrettably these specific comparisons occur infrequently. In this book it is an opportunity the author ought not to have missed.

Raymond M. Lane

Raymond M. Lane is a journalist who writes educational and children's films.

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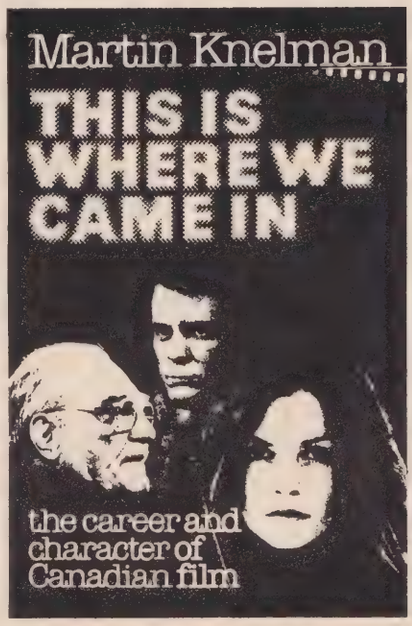

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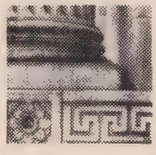

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Books in Brief

Books for reference and research are among the most eagerly sought by film scholars and buffs. Here is a selection from the recent crop.

The achievements of the National Film Board of Canada as a government-sponsored, non-commercial production and distribution center are detailed in a thorough and engrossing book, *Film as a National Art: NFB of Canada and the Film Board Idea* by C. Rodney James. It offers a history of the NFB and its predecessor, a perspective on the 8000 films it produced since its inception, an appraisal of the NFB-Canadian government relationship, and an assessment of John Grierson's inspiring leadership. (Arno Press $43.00)

In *Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau 1917-1941,* Charles F. Backhouse presents a valuable study of NFB's predecessor, which effectively publicized the country and its scenic, cultural and industrial aspects. (Canadian Film Institute $2.50)

Both the above books are heavily indebted to Marjorie McKay's *History of the National Film Board of Canada,* a seminal work of remarkable scholarship, accuracy and perception, commissioned in 1964 by NFB and available to researchers from that organization.

Celebrating its 28th year of publication, John Willis' *Screen World 1977* is a profusely illustrated statistical and pictorial record of 1976 movies, with complete cast-&-credits for all films released in the U.S. that year. (Crown $12.95) (In Canada: General Publishing $15.95)

An appealing book, *The Animated Raggedy Ann & Andy* by John Canemaker follows from conception to completion the making of Richard Williams' film. Extensively illustrated, it is a comprehensive and expertly assembled record of a successful production. (Bobbs-Merrill $25.00/ 12.95) (In Canada: Thomas Allen $29.95/ $15.50)

The third revised and enlarged edition of a critical study by the well-known film scholar Herman G. Weinberg, *The Lubitsch Touch,* has just been issued. It is a classical book, basic in any library. (Dover $4.00) (In Canada: General Publishing $4.75)

A broad survey of films with all-black cast, *Blacks in Black and White* by Henry T. Sampson lists some 400 independently-produced features of the 1910-50 period with full credits and other relevant data. (Scarecrow $13.00)

Michael G. Fitzgerald's *Universal Pictures* is an entertaining and informative large-format, 800-page book that surveys the colorful panorama of the studio's evolution from its founding by Carl Laemmle in 1912 to its take-over by MCA in 1964. (Arlington $30.00) (In Canada: Dent $29.95)

In *Big U: Universal in the Silent Days,* I.G. Edmunds discusses the 1912-29 period when the studio played an often decisive part in the movies' progress in casting, literary material, techniques and financing. (Barnes $15.00) (In Canada: Smithers & Bonnellie $19.50)

Edited by B.V. Dharap, *Indian Films 1976* provides a documented and comprehensive view of the prolific Indian film industry, whose 507 features and some 1000 shorts made that year are described with full production details. (MPE, Poona, Rs.35/ .)

A stimulating and practical how-to manual, *The Family Movie-Making Book* by Jay Garon with Morgan Wilson, is chock-full of ingenious and useful hints on producing and marketing a better class of home movies. (Bobbs-Merrill $10.95) (In Canada: Thomas Allen $13.25)

Viewing sex film production as a valuable training ground for future directors, Steven Ziplow presents in *The Film Maker's Guide to Pornography* a detailed guide to the genre, with all necessary practical advice on the various aspects of production, how to deal with performers, legal risks, and breaking into the field. (Drake $6.95) (In Canada: General Publishing $8.50)

George L. George

Livres

FilmEditions, under the experienced direction of Pierre Lherminier, is probably the most active of French publishers of film books. In addition to special volumes, it issues 6 yearly numbers of "Cinéma d'aujourd'hui" which survey significant aspects of the medium. Well researched and attractively presented, they offer in-depth analyses by teams of experts of topical questions confronting the industry and current problems facing the craft.

The most recent is a broad study of the French film world, *Le cinéma français au présent.* It opens on a sobering panorama of French film history from 1946 on, followed by a detailed review of its professional, governmental and industrial structures, and concludes with a forecast of its perspectives. (FilmEditions F. 28.00)

Equally informative is *L'Angleterre et son cinéma* which deals with documentary production in Great Britain from 1927 to 1965. During these particularly fruitful years, the genre perfected its approach to reality and refined its stylistic amalgam of objectivity and interpretation. (FilmEditions F.15.00)

In *Le métier d'acteur,* basic questions are raised concerning the psychological, professional and social circumstances that face the screen actor as he practices his craft, and in particular his rapport with the director. (FilmEditions F.15.00)

In FilmEdition's collection "Cinéma Permanent," three important volumes. *Le cinéma de François Truffaut* by Jean Collet explores the "enigmas posed by Truffaut's apparently limpid oeuvre" and discusses the "mysterious relationship between words and image." A stimulating book that opens new perspectives. (FilmEditions F.48.00)

In *Les contes moraux d'Eric Rohmer,* Marion Vidal analyzes the contradictions and antimonies she finds in Rohmer's films, blended in elegant reconciliations between intellectualism and sensuality. A highly original work that underlines Rohmer's mastery of style. (FilmEditions F.33.00)

François Chevassu's *L'expression cinématographique* examines film from the spectator's point of view, challenging preconceived ideas about the impact of visual techniques, dramatic construction and acting. Specific films are mentioned to buttress the author's arguments. (FilmEditions F.39.00)

The impact of surrealism on movies is discussed by Alain and Odette Virmaux in *Les surréalistes et le cinéma.* Whether as writers, critics or actual filmmakers (Bunuel, Man Ray, Fernand Léger, Hans Richter), surrealists translated into cinematic terms the movement's objectives of aesthetic liberation. (Seghers F.48.00)

Georges Wakhevitch, the French art director notable for his screen and stage work, reveals in *L'envers des décors* the

Home Movies

A regular up-date on activity in three media (Super-8, videotape and videodisc) that allow the film buff to own and exhibit his or her favorite feature film at home.

War of the Recorders

With the Christmas season fast approaching, the battle between the two major videocassette recorder (VCR) manufacturers for the high-ticket gift-giver has heated up. On one side is Sony's Betamax (also being sold under the Zenith, Sears, Sanyo and Toshiba labels); on the other Matsushita's machine (which appears under the RCA, Magnavox, Sylvania, Panasonic, Quasar and JVC names). Naturally, the two systems are incompatible—tapes made in the Sony Beta format cannot be played on Matsushita's VHS system, or vice versa—so the battle is for more than the Christmas dollar: It's very likely that the winner of the skirmishes over the next few months will eventually have the field to themselves.

In the beginning there was Sony's Betamax, with a one-hour playing or recording time. Selling in the US at $1300 ($1400 in Canada), it was an immediate success, selling some 35,000 units in North America during 1976 (estimates for 1977 Betamax sales run to 85,000). And each Betamax owner (according to Sony) was buying from 12 to 18 of the half-inch videocassettes. When Universal Studios and Walt Disney Productions initiated a court challenge to the Sony machine, claiming that it violates copyrights, Betamax sales only speeded up.

Sony's original machine was rapidly followed by a spate of others that offered two hours of recording or playback (Zenith's Beta-based VCR, JVC's Vidstar, Quasar's Great Time Machine, and Sony's own Betamax X2), and then RCA (using Matshushita's technology and cutting the tape speed in half) struck back in late summer with the first four-hour machine (named SelectaVision), priced at $1000—about $300 less than the list price for most other recorders (though many dealers discount the $1300 VCRs to almost $1000). (Black and white cameras for most of these systems are available at $300-$400, but color cameras start about $1500. VHS-format tapes sell at $17.95 for two hours and $24.95 for four hours.)

Not to be outdone, Sony (which spends $300-400 in advertising for every machine sold) then announced a changer for its machines that could give Betamax-owners four hours of recording or playback time (two cassettes-worth) without the loss of quality inherent in RCA's slower tape speeds. And in early September, Sony introduced a new, three-hour cassette (the L-750) which, with the $100 changer, will now give Betamax-owners up to six hours of programming.

Programming

What—apart from one's favourites off the tube—to put on those cassettes? Well, there doesn't appear to be any shortage of material, since—among other things—most firms that used to distribute solely on film have gotten involved with videotape and cassettes. Among the "majors," Twentieth Century-Fox has licensed Magnetic Video Corp. (of Farmington Hills, Mich.) and Teletronics International (of NYC) to produce and market both Beta and VHS-format tapes of 50 pre-1972 feature films (including *MASH* and *The French Connection*). We'll have more reports on feature-film availabilities in the months ahead.

Teletronics, meanwhile, is offering to transfer to Betamax cassette (at about $25 apiece), such things as Super-8 films (or 16mm films or slides)—with an additional charge for adding background music or titles).

Of continuing concern, however,—despite the appearance on the scene of several electronic antipiracy systems—is the illegal duplication of program, still a major problem.

Slipped Discs?

In all the excitement over the apparent success of the VCR, the debut of the much-vaunted discs has slipped further into the future. While MCA is still talking about beginning to test-market its DiscoVision system by the end of the year, and—in France—the Thomson-CSF system is said to have been acquired by some 1000 theatres (to promote their features in cinema lobbies), RCA has closed down its Indianapolis videodisc production line and re-assigned or laid off more than 100 workers (the problem apparently being that the 30-minute per side capacity of the discs is beginning to compare unfavourably with that of the VCRs).

And the expected revolution in big-screen TV projection is also slow getting off the mark. The Advent Corp.

continued on page 52

artistic concepts and practical solutions that guided his impressive set-designing for such directors as Jean Renoir, René Clair, Jean Cocteau and Marcel Carné. (Laffont F.48.00)

François Truffaut's screenplay of his latest movie, *L'homme qui aimait les femmes*, written in semi-novelized style, manages artfully to translate into words the film's fluid and engaging approach to a sophisticated love story. (Flammarion F.20.00)

A gossipy chronicle of the French film circles in the years 1930-40, *Le ciné-monde* by journalist Suzanne Chantal brings back to life an insouciant and frantic period, replete with celebrity names and film titles that marked the era between the advent of sound and World War II. (Grasset F.49.00)

George L. George

Books on Film: A Checklist

Compiled by George L. George

New books dealing in whole or in part with the motion picture and issued, for the most part, in the English language by North American publishers; also new editions of out-of-print titles, and novels the significance of which transcends their fictional format. Canadian agents and prices (where differing from U.S. publisher and price) are noted in brackets.

The Aesthetic of Isolation in Film Theory: Hugo Munsterberg. By Donald Laurence Fredericksen. Arno Press 1977. 359 pp. $22. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

James Agee: A Study of His Film Criticism. By John J. Snyder. Arno Press 1977. 229 pp. $15. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

American Visions: The Films of Chaplin, Ford, Capra and Welles, 1936-1941. By Charles J. Maland. Arno Press 1977. 459 pp. $27. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

Authorship and Narrative in the Cinema. By William Luhr and Peter Lehman. Putnam 1977. 320 pp. $8.95 (H). (Longman, $4.50 and $10.95). Essays on contemporary aesthetics and criticism.

Cast of Thousands. By Anita Loos. Grosset & Dunlap 1977. 280 pp. $15.95 until 1-1-78, $19.95 thereafter. (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $24.15). Recollections.

Changing. By Liv Ullman. Knopf 1977. 224 pp. $8.95 (H). (Random House, $9.95). Autobiography of the actress.

Close Up: The Contract Director. Jon Tuska (gen. ed.) Scarecrow 1976. 471 pp. $17.50 (H). Career studies of 10 directors under contract to large studios.

The Creation of Dino De Laurentiis' King Kong. By Bruce Bahrenburg. Pocket Books 1977. 273 pp. $1.75 (P).

Development of American Motion Picture Content and Techniques Prior to 1904. By Richard Arlo Sanderson. Arno Press 1977. 234 pp. $18. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

Marlene Dietrich. By Sheridan Morley. McGraw-Hill 1977. 128 pp. $6.95 (H).

Eisenstein. By Norman Swallow. Dutton 1977. 155 pp. $3.50 (P). A documentary portrait.

Evolution of Style in the Early Work of Dziga Vertov. By Seth R. Feldman. Arno Press 1977. 233 pp. $15. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

Film Review Digest Annual 1976. KTO Press (Rte. 100, Millwood, N.Y.) 1977. 394 pp. $35. (H). Cumulation of quarterly publication of film appraisals excerpted from 27 wide-ranging periodicals.

Film Theory of James Agee. By Mark Wilson Flanders. Arno Press 1977. 268 pp. $18. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

Fortune in Films. By Andrzej B. Moszynski and Robert C. Nicol. Film Finance Publications (Box 2022, N.Y.C. 10017). $15. (P). The financing of independent productions.

Ginger, Loretta and Irene Who? By George Eells. Putnam 1977. 393 pp. $9.95. (Longman, $11.75). The careers of Ginger Rogers, Loretta Young, Miriam Hopkins, Kay Francis, Ruth Etting and Irene Bentley.

Samuel Goldwyn Presents. By Alvin H. Marill. Barnes 1977. 320 pp. $19.95 (H). (Smithers & Bonellie, $26.50). An illustrated study of Goldwyn's films and stars.

Good Company. By Irving Drutman. Little, Brown 1976. 274 pp. $7.95 (H). ($9.). Memoirs of a theatrical and film agent.

Great Times, Good Times. By James Kotsilibas-Davis. Doubleday 1977. 538 pp. $12.95 (H). ($14.95). The odyssey of Maurice Barrymore and his clan.

The Great Western Pictures. By James Roberts Parish and Michael R. Pitts. Scarecrow 1976. 477 pp. $16.50 (H). Filmographies.

The Greatest Star. By René Jordan. Berkeley 1977. 242 pp. $1.75 (P). A biography of Barbra Streisand.

A Guide to Independent Film and Video. Hollis Melton (ed.). Anthology Film Archives 1976. 87 pp. $4. (P). Information for the film / video-maker.

Hangin' In With the Holy Grail. By Nancy Warfield. Little Film Gazette (227 W. 11th St., N.Y.C. 10011) 1976. 28 pp. $4.95 (P). Report on 1976 Western Film Conference.

A Historical and Critical Survey of the Science Fiction Film. By Douglas Menville. Arno 1977. 185 pp. $11. (H). An M.A. thesis.

Honey. By Honey Bruce. Playboy 1977. 309 pp. $10.95 (H). (Musson, $13.50). Autobiography of comedian Lenny Bruce's widow.

The Identity Crisis Theme in American Feature Films, 1960-1969. By John L. Mason. Arno Press 1977. 384 pp. $25. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

The Illustrated Elvis. By W.A. Harbinson. Grosset & Dunlap 1976. 160 pp. $4.95 (P). (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $15.75 and $5.95). Presley, of course.

Keaton: The Silent Features Close Up. By Daniel Moews. U. of Calif. Press 1977. 337 pp. $11.95 and $4.50. A study of Keaton's films.

Klaw and Erlanger Present Famous Plays in Pictures. By Kemp R. Niver. Locare 1976. 178 pp. $13.95 (H). Early film production in New York.

Fritz Lang. By Lotte H. Eisner. Oxford U. Press 1977. 416 pp. $25. (H). ($27.50).

Long Live the King. By Lyn Tornabene. Putnam 1977. 396 pp. $10.95 (H). (Longman, 12.95). Biography of Clark Gable.

Memoirs of a Moviegoer. By Henry Random. Editorial Service Bureau 1976. 144 pp. $3.50 (H). A film addict's nostalgic souvenirs.

Movie Comedy. Stuart Byron and Elisabeth Weis (eds.). Grossman 1977. 308 pp. $15. (H). (Penguin, $17.95). Essays and reviews by members of the National Society of Film Critics.

The National Board of Censorship [Review] of Motion Pictures, 1909-1922. By Charles Matthew Feldman. Arno Press 1977. 231 pp. $15. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

The New Latin American Cinema. By Julianne Burton. Cineaste 1976. 29 pp. $1.00 (P). Annotated bibliography of English-language sources, 1960-1976.

The Official Fonzie Scrapbook. By Ben Davidson. Grosset & Dunlap 1976. 104 pp. $3.95 (P). (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $11.95 and $4.80). All about Henry Winkler, the new TV / film idol.

The Other Side of Henry Winkler. Warner 1977. 162 pp. $3.95 (P). The story of Henry "The Fonz" Winkler.

The Real Mary Tyler Moore. By Chris Bryars. Pinnacle 1976. 164 pp. $1.50 (P).

The Recording Studio Handbook. By John M. Woram. Sagamore 1977. 496 pp. $35. (H). Technical text.

The Restless Journey of James Agee. By Geneviève Moreau. Morrow 1977. 320 pp. $10.95 (H). (Gage, $12.95). A biography of the film, critic, screenwriter and novelist.

Paul Robeson: All-American. By Dorothy Butler Gilliam. New Republic 1976. 216 pp. $8.95 (H). (Clarke, Irwin, $10.75). A biography of the black performer.

The Will Rogers Scrapbook. By Bryan B. Sterling. Grosset & Dunlap 1976. 190 pp. $12.95 (H). (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, $15.75 and $8.50).

The Science Fiction Book. By Franz Rottensteiner. NAL 1977. 160 pp. $6.95 (P). (Har-Nal). Chapters on sci-fi in films and on TV.

George C. Scott: The Man, the Actor and the Legend. By Allen Harbinson. Pinnacle 1977. 243 pp. $1.75 (P).

Selected Attempts at Stereoscopic Moving Pictures and Their Relationship to the Development of Motion Picture Technology, 1852-1903. By H. Mark Gosser. Arno Press 1977. 344 pp. $20. (H). An M.A. thesis.

The Silent Picture. Numbers 1-19 (1968-1974). Arno Press 1977. $50. (H). A bound collection of the quarterly devoted to silent films.

The Simplification of American Life: Hollywood Films of the 1930s. By Jeffery Morton Paine. Arno Press 1977. 305 pp. $20. (H). A Ph.D. thesis.

Slow Fade to Black. By Thomas Cripps. Oxford U. Press 1976. 447 pp. $19.95 and $5.95 ($22.95 and $6.95). The Negro in American films, 1900-1942.

A Title guide to the Talkies, 1964 through 1974. By Andrew A. Aros. Scarecrow Press 1977. 344 pp. $12.50 (H). A reference compilation.

Dalton Trumbo. By Bruce Cook. Scribners 1976. 343 pp. $12.50 (H). (Wiley, $14.95). A biography of the screenwriter.

Vintage Films. By Bosley Crowther. Putnam 1977. 237 pp. $15. (H). (Longman, $17.75). A selection by the critic emeritus of the **N.Y. Times.**

Who's Who in Hollywood 1900-1976. By David Ragan. Arlington 1977. 864 pp. $25. (H). (Dent, $29.50). Biographical references.

Women and Film: A Bibliography. By Rosemary Ribich Kowalski. Scarecrow 1976. 287 pp. $11. (H).

George L. George, an Academy Award winner, has for many years combined film directing and film book reviewing in France, Canada and the U.S.A.

INFO

BOOKER'S GUIDE TO SOURCES OF 16MM FILMS MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE

In general, if a film is mentioned in this issue of TAKE ONE, and distributed in either Canada or the US in 16mm, the name and address of those distributors are given below. Where we have been unable to find the name of such a distributor, the name of the producer or original overseas distributor is provided in brackets. TAKE ONE remains happy to assist our readers in contacting a film's producers with a view to exhibiting any feature mentioned in the magazine.

Annie Hall. UA.
Baxter, Vera Baxter. (Sunchild, Paris)
The Big Parade. CAN:CFI. US:FI.
The Blue Max. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Le Bonheur. CAN:AST. US:JAN.
Le Camion. (Films Molière, Paris)
The Cassandra Crossing. CAN:AST*
Cheyenne Autumn. CAN:WB. US:MAB.
Cléo de 5 à 7. US:CMH.
Les Créatures. US:NFY.
La Dentellière (The Lacemaker). Gaumont, Paris)
Le Diable probablement. (Gaumont, Paris)
Dishonored. UNI.
Doc. UA.
Donovan's Reef. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
The Double Day. CAN:DEC. US:TRI.
Even Dwarfs Started Small. CAN:NCE. US:NLC.
Every Man for Himself and God Against All (The Enigma of Kasper Hauser). US:C5.
Fata Morgana. CAN:CCI. US:NLC.
Femmes au soleil. CAN:PRF.
Fort Apache. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Freud. UNI.
The Fugitive. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
The Godfather. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
The Godfather, Part II. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
The Grapes of Wrath. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Harry and Tonto. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Harry and Walter Go to New York. CAN:AST. US:SWK.
Horse Feathers. UNI.
The Horse Soldiers. UA.
How Green Was My Valley. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
How the West Was Won. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
The Informer. CAN:AST. US:FI.
I Will, I Will... For Now. CAN:IFD. US:FI.
Une Journée particulière. C5.
Judge Priest. CAN:ITF. US:FI.
The Lady Vanishes. CAN:AST. US:JAN.
The Last Hurrah. CAN:AST. US:TWY.
Last Tango in Paris. UA.
The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo. CAN:NCE. US:SBC.
Lifeboat. US:FI.
Lion's Love. CAN:NCE. US:TWY.
The Long Voyage Home. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Looking for Mr. Goodbar. CAN:PAR* US:FI*
Love and Death. UA.
Lovers and Other Strangers. CAN:IFD. US:FI.
The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
Mary of Scotland. CAN:AST. US:FI.
The Merry Widow. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
Mr. Roberts. CAN:WB.US:TWY.
Monkey Business. CAN:BEL. US:UNI, TWY.
Monsieur Beaucaire. MMA.
Mujer de Milfuegos. SBC.
My Darling Clementine. CAN:ITF. US:FI.
Night Moves. WB.
The Night Visitor. CAN:IFD. US:CMH.
Nov 15. APV.
One Man. NFB.
Outrageous. CAN:NCE*
Paradiso. (Z Productions, Paris)
Play It Again Sam. CAN:PAR. US:FI.
La Pointe courte. CAN:FAR.
La Question. (Z Productions, Paris)
The Quiet Man. CAN:IFD. US:IVY.
Red River. UA.
Rituals. CAN:AST*
The Searchers. WB.
Seven Women. CAN:BEL. US:FI.
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon. CAN:AST. US:TWY.
Skip Tracer. (Highlights Prods., Vancouver)
Slapshot. UNI.
Sleeper. UA.
Stagecoach. CAN:AST. US:MAB.
Stroszek. CAN:NCE. US:NYF.
The Sun Shines Bright. US:IVY.
They Were Expendable. US:FI.
Three Godfathers. US:FI.
Touch of Evil. CAN:UNI. US:TWY.
The Uncanny. CAN:AST*
L'Une chante, l'autre pas. C5.
Valentino. UA*
Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort. LNR.
Wagonmaster. CAN:AST. US:FI.
Welcome to Blood City. CAN:AMB.
Why Shoot the Teacher?. CAN:AMB*
A Woman of Paris. RBC.
Young Mr. Lincoln. US:FI.

* a 16mm print may not be currently available.

While based on sources we believe reliable and up-to-date, TAKE ONE cannot guarantee the accuracy of any of the above information, nor assume any liability for damages caused by any mis-information given. We are happy to print additions and corrections in future issues.

AMB. Ambassador Films, 88 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto M4P 1B8.
APV. ACPAV, 280 Sherbrooke West, Montreal H2X 1X9.
AST. Astral Films. 720 King St. W., Toronto M5V 2T3.
BEL. BelleVue Distributors, 227 Victoria St., Toronto M5B 1B6.
C5. Cinema Five, 595 Madison Ave., New York 10022.
CCI. Co-operative cinéastes indépendants, 2012 Ontario East, Montreal H2K 1V3.
CFI. Canadian Film Institute, 1762 Carling Ave., Ottawa K2A 2H7.
CMH. Contemporary Films / McGraw-Hill, Princeton Rd., Hightstown, NJ 08520.
DEC. Dec Films, 121 Avenue Rd., Toronto M5R 2G3.
FAR. Faroun Films, 136 St. Paul St. E., Montreal H2Y 1G6.
FI. Films Inc., 1144 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091 (and regional offices).
IFD. International Film Distributors, 175 Bloor East, Toronto M4W 1E2.
ITF. International Tele-Film, 47 Densley Ave., Toronto M6M 2P5.
IVY. Ivy Films, 165 West 46th St., NYC 10022.
JAN. Janus Films, 745 5th Ave., NYC 10022.
LNR. Le Nouveau réseau, 1151 Alexandre de Sève, Montreal H2L 2T7.
MAB. MacMillan Audio Brandon, 34 MacQuesten Parkway S., Mt. Vernon, NY 10550.
MMA. Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 St., NYC 10019.
NCE. New Cinema Enterprises, 35 Britain St., Toronto M5A 1R7.
NFB. National Film Board of Canada (offices in New York, around the world and across Canada).
NLC. New Line Cinema, 853 Broadway, NYC 10003.
NYF. New Yorker Films, 43 West 61 St., NYC 10023.
PAR. Paramount Pictures, Toronto Star Bldg., 1 Yonge St., Toronto M5E 1E9.
PRF. Prima Films, 1594 St. Joseph E., Montreal H2J 1M7.
RBC. RBC Films, 933 North La Brea Ave., Los Angeles 90038.
SBC. Serious Business Co., 1609 Jaynes St., Berkeley, CA 94703.
SWK. Swank Motion Pictures, 200 S. Jefferson, St. Louis, MO 63166 (and regional offices).
TRI. Tricontinental Film Center, 333 Sixth Ave., NYC 10014 (and regional offices).
TWY. Twyman Films, 329 Salem Ave., Dayton, OH 45401.
UA. United Artists Corp., Suite 800, 2180 Yonge St., Toronto M4S 2B9, and 729 Seventh Ave., NYC 10019.
UNI. Universal Films, 2450 Victoria Park Ave., Willowdale M2J 4A1, and 445 Park Ave., NYC 10022.
WB. Warner Brothers Distributors, 70 Carlton St., Toronto M5B 1L7, and 400 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91505.

SIXTEEN MILLIMETRE NEWS

Geoffrey Bell has made a 26-minute film that documents that extraordinary moment when still pictures began to move. **The First (Motion) Picture Show** recreates (within the framework of a "reportage") the events of May 4, 1880, when Eadweard Muybridge projected from his "zoogyroscope" a series of pictures of a galloping horse. Various other early devices, and the pioneering work of such people as Da Vinci and Daguerre, are also examined. The color film may be bought ($320 film, $210 videotape) or rented ($23) from Donna Lee Smith, University of California Extension Media Center, Berkeley, CA 94720 (415-642-0678).

The 3-D version of Jack Arnold's **Creature from the Black Lagoon** is now available exclusively in 16mm from Universal / 16, 445 Park Avenue, NY 10022 (212-759-7500). You can also obtain a free copy of their all-new 224-page catalog, which features such new releases as **Slap Shot, Fellini's Casanova, The Sting, Family Plot, Car Wash** and **The Seven-Per-Cent Solution.** Viking Films in Canada (525 Denison St., Markham, Ont.), Phoenix Films in the US (470 Park Avenue South, NYC 10016) and Contemporary Films in England (55 Greek St., Soho, London) are all distributing Marty Gross's much-hailed 28-minute film **Potters at Work**, about traditional Japanese pottery.

Our friends at Twyman Films (329 Salem Avenue, Box 605, Dayton, OH 45401; 513-222-4014) announce three new 16mm releases: Marcel Carné's **La Merveilleuse Visite** (about an angel who falls from heaven to touch the lives of unsuspecting contemporary Breton villages); Josef von Sternberg's last feature film, **Anatahan**, first released in 1953 and now totally reconstructed in the form originally conceived by its creator; and, finally, **The Wild Bunch**, now including—for the first time—all the scenes Peckinpah had to cut for the film's release (a crucial 8 minutes not of violence but of essential characterization).

Cecropia (547 Davis Bldg., 1629 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-872-1997) is selling ($400) and renting ($45) Kathleen Dowdey's **La Dolce Festa**, centred on the Feast of San Gennaro as it is celebrated in New York's "Little Italy".

Massage ("fifty minutes of relaxation in color") is a film by Gordon Inkeles (author of **The Art of Sensual Massage**) that is presently being sold ($500 in 16mm or videotape) and rented ($75) by Multi Media Resource Center, 1525 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109 (415-673-5100).

The sensation of the Locarno Film Festival (where it almost brought about the resignation of the festival's director) and London (where it is presently playing an unprecedented 8-month engagement)—**Sebastiane**—is now being distributed on this side of the Atlantic by Luna Releasing, 37 Ridley Gardens, Toronto M6R 2T7 (416-534-4998). The story of the last few days of martyr St. Sebastian, this controversial film about the relationship between sex and power is hard to categorize. It is, however, the first feature film to be shot entirely in Latin (there are English sub-titles).

CONFERENCES & COMPETITIONS

The eighth annual **Film Festival on the Exceptional Individual** takes place on March 10. 500 persons are expected to attend screenings of films and videotapes portraying handicapped children and adults, and there are awards. If you have a

film or tape you want to submit, contact Neil Goldstein, University Affiliated Program, Childens Hospital of Los Angeles, Box 54700 Terminal Annex, Los Angeles 90054.

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the 2nd international **Videodisc Programming Conference** is to be held at New York University November 16-19, with technical seminars on all aspects of home video programming, marketing and system formats. You can reach the Conference at P.O. Box 102, Cooper Station, New York 10003 (212-982-5244).

November 19 is the deadline for entries in **Movie Madness 1977**—a film competition open to all 8mm and 16mm films, of 60 minutes or less, made by residents of Washington State between the ages of 13 and 20. Write Jan Freeman Young, King County Library System, 300 Eighth Ave. North, Seattle, WA 98109.

Check the ad on our back cover: Nissan USA, distributors of Datsun autos, are sponsoring **Focus '78**—a competition to encourage and reward college-level filmmakers and critics-to-be. There are scholarships, cars and equipment to be won in either the Filmmaking (films entered may be animation, experimental, documentary or narrative) or the Film Study (entries may be reviews, critiques, essays) categories. All submissions must be non-commercial work by a student enrolled in a US college, university, art institute or professional film school. Among the judges are Stan Vanderbeek, Molly Haskell and Andrew Sarris. Further information: Focus, 530 Fifth Avenue, NY 10036.

Rational / Irrational: The Apollonian and the Dionysian in Literature and Film is the title of a three-day (Jan. 26-28) conference sponsored by The Comparative Literature Circle of The Florida State University. For registration information: Prof. Peter Stowell, Dept. of English, Florida State University, Talahassee, FL 32306.

Purdue University's third annual **Conference on Film** (Mar. 16-18) is presently calling for papers to be delivered at a variety of panels. There will also be workshops and screenings. Complete details are available from Ben Lawton, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907.

Temple University will be holding its seventh annual **Conference on Visual Anthropology** Mar. 8-11, complete with discussions, screenings, technical exhibits and workshops. Application forms (for films, video-tapes, or still photos) are available from Jay Ruby, Director, COVA-78, Dept. of Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122 (215-787-7601). Deadline for submissions is Nov. 1.

Advance notice that **Hemisfilm '78** will take place Feb. 6-8, with the deadline for film entries Jan. 13. For information: IFACS, One Camino Santa Maria, San Antonio, TX 78284 (512-436-3209).

The National Film Society's first east-coast convention, **National Film / Con 1**, will be held in Washington November 4-6, with screenings, panels—everything to whet the appetite of any film buff or collector. To pre-register or receive further information, write: Conventions Secretary, The National Film Society Inc., 7800 Conser Place, Shawnee-Mission, Kansas 66204.

Science Fiction, Horror and Fantasy Con III (a festival / convention / sales event) is to be held at LA's Marriott Hotel Nov. 25-27. For tickets and other details, contact P.O. Box 69157, Los Angeles, CA 90069 (213-656-1266).

The tenth **Midwest Film Conference** will be held in Chicago Feb. 17-19, but Nov. 15 is the entry deadline for films (with an $8 fee if under 30 mins., $12 if over). Some 1200 teachers, librarians, filmmakers, etc. are expected to attend. Write the Conference at P.O. Box 1665, Evanston, IL 60204 (312-527-3060).

CLASSIFIEDS

FILMMAKERS: Independent studio offers beginners innovative apprentice school programs. NEA granted. 6th year. Atelier, Box 70, Hoosick Falls, NY 12090.

AMBITIOUS FILMMAKERS: Amazing new report describes how one-man operation has grossed $150,000 a year producing sponsored films. FREE LETTER with complete details. D.H. Vowell, P.O. Box 4891, North Hollywood, CA 91607.

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EDITING CONSOLES
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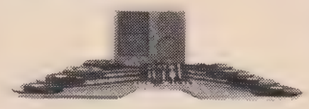

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continued from page 49

(of Cambridge, Mass.) has scaled its projections of fiscal 1978 sales down from 20,000 units to 6,000.

Super-8 News

Meanwhile, in good old Super-8, the hits just keep on coming: Peak Films Ltd. (P.O. Box 266, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3W4) has a wide selection of Paramount's Elvis Presley vehicles (including *Girls! Girls! Girls!*, *G.I. Blues*, *Blue Hawaii* and *King Creole*) in their original theatrical versions (all colour, except the last one, at $249; *King Creole*, in b&w, goes for $169.

Ivy Film (165 West 46 St., NYC 10036) have the complete 12-chapter original uncut *Buck Rogers* ($39.95 per chapter), and recently announced the release (with magnetic sound) of the full-length version of *Road to Bali* ($299), the only "Road" movie made in color. Not only does it star Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour and the late, lamented Bing Crosby, but there are cameo appearances by Humphrey Bogart, Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis and Jane Russell.

Home Cinema Service (266 Pearl Street, Hartford, CT 06103) announce the availability—on Super-8 as well as one-hour and two-hour Beta and VHS format cassettes—of the Erotic Cinema of Russ Meyer, including such classics as *The Immoral Mr. Teas*, *The Vixen* and *Cherry, Harry & Raquel*. Write for a complete catalog.

Coming Up in the January Issue of Take One...

Simon Says...

John Simon—the critic everyone loves to hate—gives us his views on Steven (*Jaws*) Spielberg's Xmas blockbuster, *Close Encounters*.

The Mammy of us all

In tribute to fifty years of sound, dozens of the world's top directors tell us how they perceive and use sound in their own films, and what they remember in the films of others.

Animation authority Joe Adamson assesses the impact of sound of cartoon films, and shows us how much more important sound was in the development of animated, as opposed to live action, films.

And, Audrey Kupferberg tells us what *really* happened when Al Jolson beat out Georgie Jessel for the lead in the film that changed it all—*The Jazz Singer.*

Grants to Ontario Screenwriters

LOOK

The Ontario Arts Council announces a competition for a limited number of Grants of up to $3,000 each for Ontario writers wishing to create scripts for feature-length dramatic films.

Deadline for Application is December 15, 1977.

Applicants must be Ontario Residents and must submit:

1. Completed Ontario Arts Council Application Forms;
2. A previously completed screenplay to indicate familiarity with the craft of writing for the screen;
3. An outline for the proposed script on which the writer wishes to work with Grant Assistance.

Results of the competition will be announced in early March, 1978.

For Application Forms and additional information contact:

The Film Office
Ontario Arts Council
151 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1T6
(416) 961-1660

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PUNDITS' PAGE

A HANDY-DANDY GUIDE TO SOME OF THIS SEASON'S MAJOR FILMS, IN THE FORM OF CRITICAL NUGGETS GLEANED FROM THE WRITINGS OF AMERICA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL MOVIE CRITICS.

COMPILED BY SUSAN SCHENKER

BOBBY DEERFIELD

Directed by Sydney Pollack. Screenplay by Alvin Sargent. With Al Pacino, Marthe Keller, Anny Duperey.

"What can you say about a guy who, when he's in bed with a new girl for the first time, and strokes her sleeping head, and finds that a large hank of her hair comes out in his hand, simply shrugs and replaces the hair, patting it back in place as if it were self-sticking?... [a] big, expensive, ultimately ridiculous movie that appears to have been constructed to be a *Love Story* on wheels." Vincent Canby, *New York Times.*

"If Al Pacino had sent forth his agent to search the world for the role that would call attention to all his weaknesses, the agent could not have come up with an unholier grail than *Bobby Deerfield* ..." Pauline Kael, *New Yorker.*

"What is especially good about this picture is that awareness of its main theme—the chancy, mysterious, unfair workings of mortality—is present, as it should be in the calculations of any healthy individual, but it appears as neither obsession nor nasty surprise." Richard Schickel, *Time.*

VALENTINO

Directed by Ken Russell. Screenplay by Russell and Mardik Martin. With Rudolf Nureyev, Michelle Phillips, Leslie Caron, Carol Kane.

"Uneven yet striking probing of the Rudolph Valentino myth of 1920s... Careful sell needed. But flamboyance and Rudolf Nureyev's charisma big assets..." Mosk., *Variety.*

"*Valentino* is Mr. Russell's least disturbing movie since *The Boy Friend*: That should come as a relief to his detractors and as a slight disappointment to those who respect and appreciate his abrasive energy." Janet Maslin, *New York Times.*

JULIA

Directed by Fred Zinnemann. Screenplay by Alvin Sargent from Lillian Hellman's *Pentimento.* With Jane Fonda, Vanessa Redgrave, Jason Robards.

"Fonda and Redgrave stare at each other intensely enough, but these two extraordinary actress-personalities completely fail to connect or communicate in an interesting manner. We must take their relationship on faith, and my faith, in this instance, is very shaky." Andrew Sarris, *Village Voice.*

"Fonda and Redgrave, neither one a shrinking violet in real life, are dynamite together on the screen, so much so that further mutual projects are anticipated." Murf., *Variety.*

"But if the film is concerned with relationships and issues... it is not didactic... Its moral vision never imposes itself but rises naturally and inevitably from character and action." Joy Gould Boyum, *Wall Street Journal.*

"Perhaps to give *Julia* the aura of art, Zinnemann has dotted the film with pretty recurring images... But this is artiness, not art. Though *Julia* is all dressed up to be a great movie, it never figures out how to get where it wants to go." Frank Rich, *Time.*

"...Zinnemann tries to suggest the scope and historical context of the period with dazzling location sequences that are a poor substitute for the emotional and political terrain left unexplored." Molly Haskell, *New York.*

ONE SINGS, THE OTHER DOESN'T

Directed by Agnes Varda. Screenplay by Varda. With Valerie Mairesse and Therese Liotard.

"I admit that my tepid reaction to *One Sings, The Other Doesn't* is biased. I'm not more or less interested in 'women's' pictures than in 'men's' pictures. I am interested in good movies, which transcend sex." Vincent Canby, *New York Times.*

"It is sufficiently amusing and easygoing to disarm viewers who might otherwise be put off by its didactic intentions and radical bias. The film's basic appeal, however, lies in the special insight it offers into the concerns and emotional texture of women's lives..." Joy Gould Boyum, *Wall Street Journal.*

"If Varda had any startling insights, *One Sings, The Other Doesn't* might be tolerable—but this movie seems to be pitched at audiences that have never heard of feminism before." Frank Rich, *Time.*

Susan Schenker is a New York writer and freelance story analyst for major motion picture companies.

"'LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBAR' IS ONE OF THE BEST MOTION PICTURES EVER MADE!"

—Liz Smith, N.Y. Daily News Syndicated Columnist

"DIANE KEATON IS CERTAIN TO CAPTURE AN OSCAR NOMINATION. 'Looking For Mr. Goodbar' reverberates with her intensity. I found it was impossible to forget, and scenes from the movie continue to stay in my mind almost a week after seeing it!"—*Rona Barrett, ABC-TV*

"RIVETING...A DRAMATIC BLOCKBUSTER...Diane Keaton reveals new emotional depths and enhances the film with her characteristic ease and spontaneity!"
—*Bruce Williamson, Playboy*

"Richard Brooks should get two Oscar nominations, one for his screenplay, one for directing. And Diane Keaton should get the Oscar to take home as best actress of the year in this UNFORGETTABLE, HIGH-IMPACT FILM!"
—*Liz Smith, N.Y. Daily News Syndicated Columnist*

"'LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBAR' IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT, MEANINGFUL AND THOROUGHLY CONSUMATE PIECES OF FILMMAKING I HAVE SEEN IN A DECADE OF MOVIES... Diane Keaton burns a hole through the screen... IF SHE DOESN'T WIN AN OSCAR, THERE IS NO GOD!"
—*Rex Reed, New York Daily News*

"DIANE KEATON PROJECTS THE MOST ELECTRIFYINGLY EXPLICIT SEXUALITY EVER ATTAINED BY AN AMERICAN ACTRESS...There is one extraordinary scene that alone is enough to make 'Looking For Mr. Goodbar' one of the landmarks of the American Cinema... Diane Keaton adds a new erotic dimension to the motion picture screen. She is simply divine!"
—*Andrew Sarris, Village Voice*

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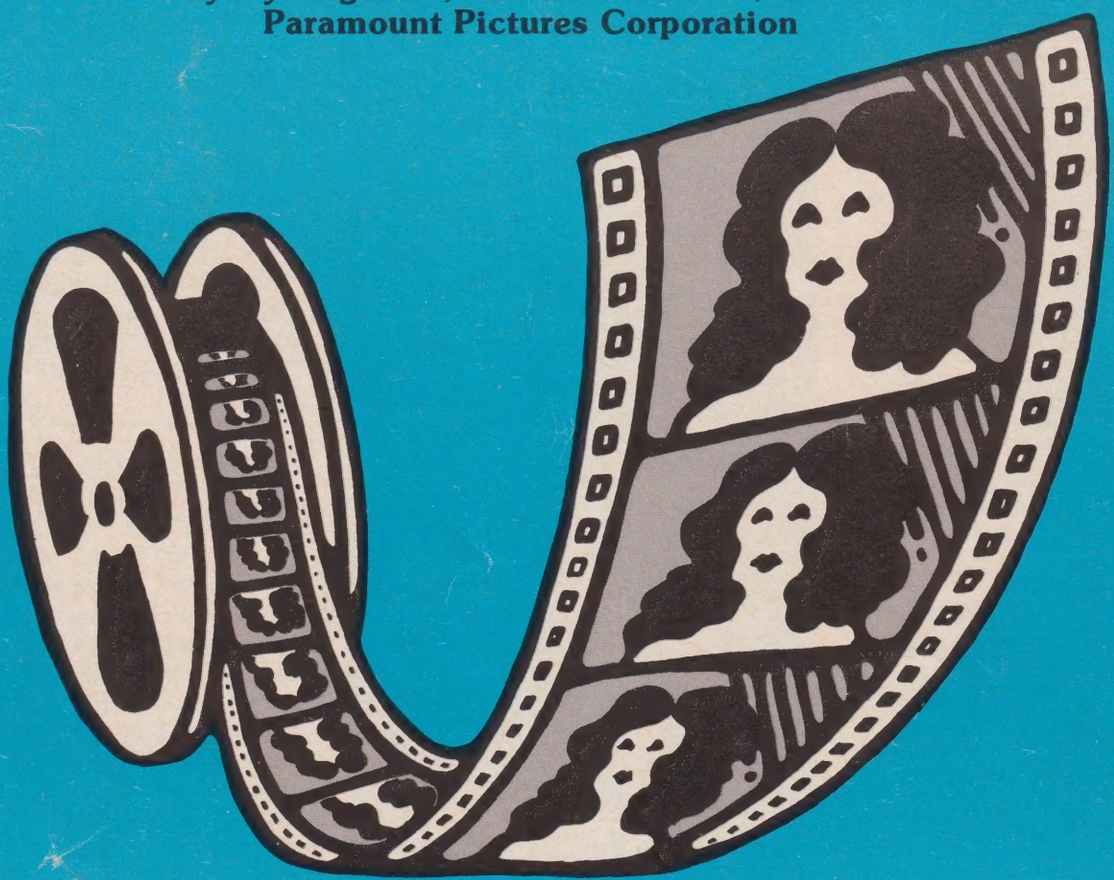

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